HENRIETTA.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

BOOK THE THIRD.

CHAP. I.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE MEETS WITH A NEW DISAPPOINTMENT, AND SOME FARTHER INSTANCES OF MISS WOODBY'S FRIENDSHIP.

HENRIETTA, being now left to her own reflections, beheld her late conduct in a light in which it had never appeared to her before; the ſenſe of blame ſo juſtly incurred, filled her with remorſe and ſhame. Hitherto ſhe had induſtriouſly aggravated the cauſe of her fears, that ſhe might not ſtand ſelf-condemned; which, to an ingenuous mind, is of all others the greateſt evil: but Mrs. Willis had ſtated her caſe too juſtly.

What force could give her unwilling hand to the old baronet? How could ſhe be cheated into a convent, when ſhe was forewarned of the deſign? From her obſtinate oppoſition to her aunt's will, nothing worſe could have happened than the loſs of her favour and protection, which by her flight ſhe had anticipated. She now wondered at the unreaſonableneſs of her fears, and looked back with the deepeſt regret upon the errors they had occaſioned.

Theſe melancholy thoughts, and her anxiety about the reception her aunt would give her, kept her waking almoſt the whole night. As ſoon as it was light, ſhe roſe, and dreſſed herſelf, impatient to be gone. Mrs. Willis, at her ſummons, made haſte to join her: and, when they had breakfaſted, ſet out immediately upon their journey; Henrietta full of perturbation and inquietude, Mrs. Willis with that ſerenity which attends the conſciouſneſs of doing what is right.

The young lady, as ſhe drew nearer her aunt's dwelling, found her emotions increaſe: one while her imagination repreſented Lady Meadows as kind and indulgent, ready to forgive her error, and to reſtore her to her affection; and, immediately after, ſhe would tremble with the apprehenſion of her ſevere reproaches.

Mrs. Willis perceived her uneaſineſs, and uſed her utmoſt endeavours to compoſe her: but when the chaiſe ſtopped at the door, ſhe was near falling into a fainting fit; and her friend was obliged to aſk if Lady Meadows was at home, for Henrietta was not able to ſpeak.

The ſervant-maid who opened the door having got a glimpſe of the young lady as ſhe ſat in the chaiſe, eagerly flew to the ſide of it. 'O my dear Miſs!' ſaid ſhe, in a tranſport of joy, 'is it you?'

'How do you do, Jenny?' ſaid Miſs Courteney; and, trembling, added, 'is 'my aunt at home?'

'My lady,' ſaid the girl, 'ſet out 'two days ago for her ſeat in Devon-'ſhire. Oh! Miſs, here has been ſad

'doings!

'doings! Poor Mrs. White is turned 'away: there came an ugly miſchief-'making lady from London, and told 'my lady a heap of ſtories about you, 'and ſo Mrs. White was turned away. 'But won't you pleaſe to alight, Miſs?'

Henrietta looked at Mrs. Willis, for ſhe knew not herſelf what to reſolve on, the news ſhe had heard having thrown her into the utmoſt perplexity. 'I wiſh 'we could ſee Mrs. White,' ſaid Mrs. Willis to her in a whiſper.

Miſs Courteney immediately enquired of the maid, how long Mrs. White had left her aunt, and where ſhe was to be found? The girl told her ſhe had been gone above a week, and that ſhe believed ſhe was at her ſiſter's in Windſor. Henrietta had often heard her mention her ſiſter, who was married to a tradeſman in Windſor; and, after ſhe had taken leave of the poor affectionate girl, who wept to ſee her depart again, ſhe gave the poſt-boy directions where to drive.

Mrs. White, when the chaiſe ſtopped at the door, heard from a little parlour where ſhe was ſitting the voice of Miſs Courteney enquiring for her, and flew with trembling eagerneſs to meet her.

'Oh! Miſs,' ſaid ſhe, taking her hand, and leading her into the room, 'I am 'rejoiced to ſee you: where have you 'been all this time? What an unfor-'tunate creature was I to be the means 'of your taking ſuch a raſh reſolution! 'Oh that I had kept what I knew to 'myſelf! But, ſurely, it was very un-'kind in you not to acquaint me with 'your deſign, nor to aſk my advice; I 'might have prevented all this trouble. 'But, thank Heaven, you are ſafe and 'well—well I ſee you are.'

Henrietta then interrupting the good woman, who, between chiding and fondneſs, had taken no notice of Mrs. Willis, —'That I am ſafe,' ſaid ſhe, 'I am 'obliged to this gentlewoman; for ſome 'ſtrange treachery was preparing for me, 'I believe, but her care has prevented 'it.'

'Treachery!' interrupted Mrs. White—'Aye, you have met with 'enough of that, I ſuppoſe: there was 'your new-found friend and acquain-'tance, Miſs—I forget her name, whom 'you told all your ſecrets to; you made 'no ſcruple to truſt her, Miſs, though 'you was ſo reſerved to me; ſhe was 'the occaſion of my loſing my place. 'Ah! Miſs—but I will not upbraid 'you; I ſee you are concerned: God 'forbid I ſhould add to your uneaſineſs; 'I have ſuffered greatly upon your ac-'count. It was very unkind in you to 'put it in the power of a ſtranger to do 'me ſo much miſchief: ſurely, I did not 'deſerve ſuch a return from you. But, 'God knows my heart, I would not up-'braid you for the world; no, I ſcorn 'it; but I have been the greateſt ſuf-'ferer, I am ſure, and yet I meant well.'

'Was not the lady's name Woodby?' interrupted Henrietta, impatient to hear the particulars of this new act of treachery and baſeneſs.

'Aye, Woodby,' replied Mrs. White, 'a diſagreeable creature as ever my 'eyes beheld. I ſhall never forget how 'ſhe ſidled into my lady's dreſſing-room, 'and, half out of breath, told her, ſhe 'had taken the liberty to wait on her 'to bring her ſome news of her niece. 'I could not hear diſtinctly all ſhe ſaid, 'for my lady ordered me to withdraw; 'but I put my ear to the key hole, as 'I had done once before for your ſer-'vice, Miſs, which I have reaſon to re-'pent, Heaven knows!—but what is paſt 'cannot be helped—it is not my way to '*rip* up things that are paſt.'

'Well,' ſaid Henrietta, 'but what 'did you hear?'

'Nay, for that matter,' reſumed Mrs. White, 'I may draw myſelf into another '*premune* perhaps: after what I have 'ſuffered, I ought to be cautious; but I 'love you, Miſs, and muſt tell you every 'thing, whatever it coſt me, and that 'you have experienced already. Well, 'ſhe made up a horrible ſtory, that you 'had gone away ſuddenly from lodg-'ings where ſhe viſited you; and, not-'withſtanding the friendſhip there was 'between you, (and a great clutter ſhe 'made with that word) you went away 'without giving her any notice of your 'intention; and this ſhe ſaid had a 'ſtrange appearance.'

Miſs Courteney lifted up her eyes here, in aſtoniſhment at what ſhe heard.

'As for me,' continued Mrs. White, 'ſhe did my buſineſs in an inſtant; for, 'as ſoon as ſhe was gone, my lady ſent 'for me, and, in a violent rage, told 'me I ſhould not ſtay another night in 'her houſe. She was informed, ſhe 'ſaid, that I had been the cauſe of your 'running away, by filling your head 'with notions of her deſigning to con-'fine you in a convent. She would

'hear

'hear nothing that I could ſay in my 'own defence; and diſmiſſed me that 'very evening.'

'I am exceſſively ſorry,' ſaid Henrietta, 'that you ſhould ſuffer ſo much 'on my account. It was indeed very 'imprudent in me to be ſo communica-'tive to Miſs Woodby, but I could not 'imagine ſhe was capable of ſo much 'treachery.'

'But how have you been able to con-'ceal yourſelf ſo well, Miſs, from the 'enquiries of all your friends?' ſaid Mrs. White. 'Mr. Damer, it ſeems, 'your guardian's ſon, knew not where 'to find you.'

'Did Mr. Damer ſay, he knew not 'where I was?' cried Miſs Courteney, in aſtoniſhment.

'He told Mr. Danvers ſo,' replied Mrs. White, 'who went ſeveral times, by 'my lady's orders, to enquire for you.'

'Was there ever ſuch complicated 'treachery!' ſaid Henrietta, looking at Mrs. Willis, with tears in her eyes. 'Well, my dear,' ſaid the good wo-man, 'there is at leaſt this advantage in 'misfortunes, that they bring us at laſt 'to wiſdom. You will for the future 'be more cautious how you engage in 'ſuch perilous enterprizes.'

'Aye, Miſs,' ſaid Mrs. White, 'and 'how you truſt falſe friends to the pre-'judice of your true ones. You ſee 'what it has coſt me.—But no more of 'that—I can forget and forgive.'

'Well, and what is now to be done?' ſaid Miſs Courteney, folding her hands with an air of deſpondence.

'It is eaſy to anſwer that queſtion,' ſaid Mrs. Willis; 'you muſt write to 'your aunt, my dear, and give her an 'account of all that has happened to you. 'There is certainly ſomething to con-'demn in what you have done; but in 'what you have ſuffered, there is much 'to be pitied. I am perſuaded her ten-'derneſs will ſilence her reſentment. I 'hoped to have left you with your aunt, 'Miſs,' continued Mrs. Willis; 'but 'ſince that cannot be, you will return 'with me, I ſuppoſe.'

'To be ſure I will,' ſaid Miſs Cour-teney; 'with whom, in my preſent ſitu-'ation, can I be ſo happy as with you?'

Mrs. White deſired ſhe might be per-mitted to come and ſee her: to which Henrietta readily conſented; promiſing, if ſhe was reconciled to her aunt, to uſe her utmoſt endeavours to reinſtate her in her place.

CHAP. II.

WHICH THROWS NEW LIGHTS UPON MR. DAMER'S BEHAVIOUR, AND CONTAINS A VERY IMPROVING CONVERSATION.

THE two ladies being again ſeated in their poſt-chaiſe, Mrs. Willis kindly applied herſelf to comfort her fair companion, whoſe affecting ſilence ſhew-ed a deeper ſenſe of her new diſappoint-ment than any words could expreſs. However, Miſs Courteney felt in reality fewer perturbations and leſs anxiety in her return, than when ſhe began her journey. So true it is, that, when we hope little, we fear little likewiſe.

She now looked upon her aunt's af-fection as irrecoverable; Miſs Woodby's vile inſinuations had ſtrengthened her ſuſpicions; Mr. Damer, when he found himſelf detected, would doubtleſs ac-count for his behaviour in a manner un-favourable to her; her unhappy flight had given ſuch a colour to her ſucceed-ing actions, as rendered any juſtification of herſelf hopeleſs; and the inſidious chaplain might now with eaſe confirm thoſe prejudices he had raiſed.

In this manner ſhe reaſoned herſelf into a belief that her misfortune was ir-remediable: deſpair, as an ingenious writer obſerves, being that eaſe to the mind which mortification is to the fleſh, Henrietta found ſome relief in being freed from that viciſſitude of hopes and fears which had ſo long held her mind in the moſt racking ſuſpence; and, with a kind of gloomy ſatisfaction, reſigned herſelf to all the bitterneſs of her fate.

Mrs. Willis, who knew not the pe-culiarities of Lady Meadows's temper, or, if ſhe had, would not perhaps have conſidered, that obſtinate people are ever moſt obſtinate in error, thought all things might be ſet right again, by Miſs Cour-teney's giving a candid narrative of what had happened to her ſince her leaving her; ſhe therefore preſſed the young lady to delay writing to her aunt no longer than the next day.

'There are ſome caſes,' ſaid Mrs. Willis to her, when ſhe ſaw her ſitting down to write, 'in which ſimplicity is

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'the greateſt refinement of art; yours 'is one of them: be as ſimple and in-'genuous as you can in the account you 'give your aunt, and let the facts ſpeak 'for themſelves.'

Henrietta followed her advice, and related every part of her conduct ſince ſhe had left her, and the treachery and deceit that had been uſed towards her, with the utmoſt plainneſs and ſincerity; and ſaw that ſhe had made her letter more affecting by it's ſimplicity, than ſhe could have done by the niceſt touches of art. Mrs. Willis read it, and approved of it; and it was immediately diſpatched to the poſt.

Scarce was this little affair over, when Mr. Damer ſent in his name.

'I like this piece of ceremony,' ſaid Mrs. Willis; 'it looks as if the man 'was aſhamed of what he has done: do 'you chuſe to ſee him, Miſs?'

'Oh! no,' replied Henrietta; 'it 'would be ſtrange, indeed, if I was 'willing to ſee a man whom you ſuſpect 'of having ſuch ſhocking deſigns, and 'who I am ſure has not acted honeſtly.'

'Well, then,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'I 'will go down to him, and hear what 'he has to ſay.'

She returned again in leſs than an hour, ſmiling. 'This young man,' ſaid ſhe, 'does not want ſenſe. What 'would you ſay, Miſs, if I was to tell 'you that he has perſuaded me he has 'acted very right, and with the beſt in-'tentions in the world?'

'I ſhould ſay, that I am leſs unhappy 'than I thought I was,' replied Miſs Courteney; 'for ſurely it is a great mis-'fortune to meet with perſons who abuſe 'our confidence and the good opinions 'we have of them.'

'That misfortune,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'will in time become ſo common, that 'you will feel it leſs ſenſibly than you 'do now. The only way to avoid be-'ing deceived, is to be always upon 'your guard againſt deceit.'

'That is to ſay, I muſt be always 'ſuſpicious,' ſaid Henrietta: 'this may 'be a very prudent maxim, but my heart 'diſavows it.'

'Alas! my dear,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'we all enter upon the world with 'high notions of diſintereſtedneſs, friend-'ſhip, ſincerity, and candour: but ex-'perience ſhows us, that theſe qualities 'exiſt not, or among ſo very few, that 'it does not fall to the lot of one mortal 'in a thouſand to meet with them in 'thoſe we contract friendſhips with. The 'frequent diſappointments we ſuffer in 'the ſearch of them, make ſuſpicion 'grow into a habit of thinking, which, 'if it leſſens our enjoyments, leſſens our 'inconveniencies likewiſe.'

'Then I,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, 'ſhall 'be always expoſed to inconveniencies; 'for I am ſure I can never bring myſelf 'to ſuſpect perſons who appear deſerv-'ing of my good opinion: and indeed 'I think it is more honourable to be of-'ten deceived, than to be always doubt-'ing.'

'But it is not ſo ſafe,' replied Mrs. Willis, ſmiling: 'however, my dear, 'in unexperienced youth like yours, this 'way of thinking is meritorious; the 'faults of the world can only be learned 'by a long acquaintance with it, and 'by ſuffering from that acquaintance. 'Thoſe who derive this kind of know-'ledge from the heart rather than the 'head, are indeed ſafe themſelves, but 'dangerous to all others.

'But I will keep you no longer in 'ſuſpence with regard to Mr. Damer. 'He has gloſſed over his behaviour ſo 'as to make me appear ſatisfied with it; 'which indeed it is neceſſary I ſhould, 'if I would not wiſh to make an enemy 'of him; and a very powerful one he 'might be to my huſband.

'He aſked for you as ſoon as he ſaw 'me, and did not ſeem ſurprized at the 'very ſlight excuſe I made for your not 'ſeeing him. He expreſſed great con-'cern for the treatment you had received 'from his wife; for, in her frantick rage, 'it ſeems ſhe told him all that had paſſed 'between you.'

"You find," ſaid he, "I did not "exaggerate my wife's failing."

"It is a great misfortune," replied I; "but, Sir, I think, if you had not made "a ſecret of your connections with Miſs "Courteney, Mrs. Damer's jealouſy "would not have had ſo plauſible an "excuſe, nor would the young lady have "had any reaſon to complain of you."

"I ſhould have found it abſolutely "impoſſible," ſaid he, "to have con-"cerned myſelf in Miſs Courteney's "affairs, or be of the leaſt uſe to her, "had my wife known any thing of the "matter; the very ſight of Miſs Cour-"teney would have rouzed her ſuſpi-

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" cions, and have put it out of my " power to act either as a friend or guar- " dian by her; and, in her unhappy " ſituation, ſhe had great need of my " care and attention."

" However, Sir," replied I, " it was " certainly ill-judged to conceal from " Miſs Courteney that you was mar- " ried: what muſt ſhe think of ſuch a " ſtrange conduct?"

" Why, Mrs. Willis," reſumed he, " I have already told you, that I could " not own my marriage to Miſs Cour- " teney, without letting her into my " reaſons for not being able to offer her " an aſylum in my houſe during her " aunt's diſpleaſure, an offer ſhe had " great reaſon to expect. I was un- " willing to expoſe my wife's foible, " and to raiſe ſcruples in the young " lady's mind, which might prevent " her from receiving thoſe little ſervices " from me which ſhe had ſo much need " of. I hope you will repreſent all this " to her, and let her know how greatly " I am afflicted at what ſhe has ſuf- " fered."

" To be ſure I will," replied I; " but " Miſs Courteney tells me you have re- " ceived letters from Mr. Damer, in " which he acquaints you that there are " ſome foreign merchants coming to " reſide in my houſe, and that ſhe was " to be removed for that reaſon. I ſur- " priſed her greatly by ſaying I had " heard nothing of it; and, indeed, I " am a good deal ſurpriſed myſelf at " it."

" Why, to be plain with you, Mrs. " Willis," ſaid the young gentleman, " this was only an invention."

" Indeed!" ſaid I, looking very grave: " to be ſure you had ſome good reaſon " for it."

" Doubtleſs I had," purſued he, " and " you yourſelf ſhall be judge of my rea- " ſon. This is a bad world, Mrs. " Willis, a very bad world: nothing " but ſtratagems and deſigns, fraud and " cunning. Our ſex, Mrs. Willis, is " in a ſtate of war with yours; our arms " are ſighs and vows, and flattery and " proteſtation, and (as in all other war- " fares) we fight to deſtroy."

' Bleſs us!' interrupted Henrietta, half ſmiling, ' what could this fine pre- ' face lead to?'

' I proteſt,' reſumed Mrs. Willis, laughing, ' it was with the utmoſt dif- ' ficulty I compoſed my countenance to ' a look of grave attention, while he ' uttered all this with a ſolemn accent, ' and an air of infinite importance.'

" Truly, Sir," replied I, " for ſo " young a gentleman, you think very " gravely of theſe matters: it is highly " commendable in one of your years."

" Heaven forbid, Mrs. Willis," ' ſaid he, " that all men ſhould be li- " bertines; but, in ſhort, it was to pre- " ſerve Miſs Courteney from falling into " the ſnares of one, that I formed an " excuſe for ſending her into the coun- " try."

' Vile diſſembler!' exclaimed Miſs Courteney again, glowing with indig- nation; ' preſerve me from falling into ' the ſnares of a libertine! I hope my ' own diſcretion, without any aid from ' him, was ſufficient to guard me againſt ' any ſnares that a libertine could lay ' for me.'

' I hope ſo too,' ſaid Mrs. Willis.

Henrietta bluſhed a little at this ex- preſſion, which ſeemed, ſhe thought, to imply a doubt, but would not interrupt Mrs. Willis again.

' I told you that this gentleman was ' very artful,' continued the good wo- man, ' as you will be convinced by the ' ſtory he related.'

" You muſt know," ſaid he to me, ' looking extremely wiſe, and lowering ' his voice, " that when I waited upon " Miſs Courteney at the lodgings ſhe " had taken after ſhe left her aunt, I " obſerved a fine gay young man there, " who followed me when I went out, " and looked at me in a manner that " ſhewed great curioſity and attention. " It came into my head that this might " be the ſpark of whom Miſs Courte- " ney's aunt was apprehenſive: I diſ- " covered that he lodged in the houſe " with the young lady; and this cir- " cumſtance I liked by no means. I " reſolved to remove her immediately, " and place her with you: ſhe ſo readily " conſented to my propoſal, that I " doubted whether I had not been ex- " tremely miſtaken in my conjectures " concerning this young gentleman; " but, a day or two after ſhe was ſettled " with you, my ſpark came to enquire " for her at my houſe. Now it was plain " that Miſs Courteney held ſome cor- " reſpondence with him, otherwiſe he " could not have known where to come " after her.

" I happened not to be at home, and

" the ſervants told him that no ſuch " perſon was there. He came ſeveral " times, and was always anſwered in " the ſame manner. His enquiries at " length reached the ears of my wife; " ſhe deſired he might be ſhewn up to " her apartment when he came next; " and it was from him that ſhe learned " Miſs Courteney was under my care.

" To one of her temper it was enough " to know that I had the management " of a lady's affairs, to make her ſuſpect " that I had a more than ordinary in- " tereſt in the lady herſelf. But ſhe " concealed her thoughts from me: and " I, who was wholly ignorant that this " gentleman had ſeen my wife, was only " concerned at the connection there " ſeemed to be between Miſs Courteney " and him; and therefore fixed upon " that ſtratagem, to remove her out of " his reach, without giving her any " ſuſpicions of the cauſe.

" I have ſince enquired about the gen- " tleman; and I hear that he is a man " of quality, and that he is ſhortly to be " married to a great fortune. Judge " now, whether his deſigns on Miſs " Courteney could be honourable; and " whether I had not reaſon to act as I " did with regard to ſending her away?"

'And now, my dear,' added Mrs. Willis, ſmiling, 'did you ever hear a 'more plauſible tale?'

'I have ſomewhere read it obſerved,' replied Henrietta, 'that we are better 'deceived by having ſome truth told us 'than none. Mr. Damer has put this 'maxim in practice: his tale is plauſible, 'becauſe part of it is true; but his infe- 'rences are all falſe, and their cauſe lies 'too deep for me to diſcover it.'

She then related ſuccinctly all that had paſſed in the houſe of Mrs. Eccles, and that ſhe had earneſtly intreated Mr. Damer to diſpoſe of her elſewhere, being reſolved, after the affront that had been offered to her, to remain there no longer. She added, that the young lord having hinted his ſuſpicions that Mr. Damer was her lover, ſhe thought herſelf obliged to tell him his name, and explain the nature of his connections with her, that ſhe might not, by going away with a perſon unknown, leave room for calumny to ſlander her.

Mrs. Willis was charmed with this candid account of her conduct, which overthrew all Mr. Damer's inſinuations. She embraced her with great tenderneſs. 'All will ſoon be ſet right,' ſaid ſhe; 'your aunt will receive you with re- 'doubled affection.' Miſs Courteney ſighed; but having already taken her reſolution, ſhe was prepared for whatever events might happen.

CHAP. III.

WHICH WE ARE AFRAID WILL GIVE SOME OF OUR READERS A MEAN OPINION OF OUR HEROINE'S UNDERSTANDING.

TWO days afterwards a letter was brought by the poſt for Miſs Courteney; the direction was in her aunt's hand. She opened it with ſome trepidation, and found it as follows:

'HENRIETTA,

'FOR niece I cannot, after what has 'happened, call you—If you had 'not, by the higheſt imprudence that 'any young woman could be guilty of, 'given too much colour for the ſhocking 'cenſures that are caſt on you, I might 'perhaps have been deceived by your 'plauſible account of things. I am 'ſorry to find you have acquired ſo much 'art, it is but too ſure a proof that you 'are leſs innocent; yet it would be eaſy 'for me to take to pieces every part of 'your defence, and ſhew you the ab- 'ſurdity of it: but this is needleſs; for 'whether you are innocent or guilty, 'you have greatly wounded your repu- 'tation, and I can no longer with ho- 'nour conſider you or treat you as my 'niece.

'There is but one way left by which 'you can retrieve your fame and my af- 'fection; motives which ought to have 'ſome weight with you, but infinitely 'leſs than the deſire of ſecuring your 'ſalvation.

'I hoped and believed your converſion 'was near compleated, and doubtleſs 'it would have been, had not your 'paſſions intervened.

'If you will retire to a convent, and 'put yourſelf into a way of being in- 'ſtructed in the true religion, I will pay 'your penſion largely; and the day that 'ſees you reunited to the faith, ſhall 'ſee you reſtored to my fondeſt affec- 'tion, and made ſole heireſs to my whole

'eſtate.

'eſtate. Conſider well before you de-
'termine; and know that, upon any
'other terms than theſe, you muſt not
'hope for farther notice from me.

'F. MEADOWS.'

Although ſeveral parts of this letter were extremely ſhocking both to the delicacy and pride of Henrietta, yet the ſhining bribe that was offered her to procure her apoſtacy, made a large compenſation. She had now an opportunity given her of making a worthy ſacrifice to the religion ſhe believed and profeſſed; a circumſtance that exalted her in her own opinion: for her ſelf-love had been deeply wounded by the humiliations ſhe had undergone; and as great delicacy always ſuffers moſt, ſo it enjoys moſt from it's own reflections.

She was not free from a little enthuſiaſm, that told her it was glorious to ſuffer in the cauſe of religion; nor ſo diſintereſted as not to feel great pleaſure in the thought of being able to free her moral character from injurious ſuſpicions, by ſo firm an attachment to her religious principles.

Her impatience to anſwer her aunt's letter would not allow her time to communicate to Mrs. Willis the contents of it: but, as ſoon as ſhe had done writing, ſhe ſent for the good woman, and put Lady Meadows's letter into her hands, with ſuch an air of conſcious ſatisfaction, as perſuaded her the ſo much deſired reconciliation was effected; but when, upon reading the letter, ſhe found her miſtake, ſhe threw it down; and, in a melancholy accent, and a look that expreſſed the moſt anxious curioſity, aſked her how ſhe had reſolved?

'Read this,' ſaid Henrietta, giving her the letter ſhe had written; 'I am ſure you will not diſapprove of what I have 'done.' Mrs. Willis read it eagerly, and found it as follows:

'MADAM,

'IT is a great grief to me to find that 'your affection is irrecoverable, 'for, at the price you have ſet upon it, I 'muſt ever deem it ſo. If my defence ſeems 'abſurd, Madam, it is becauſe truth 'is too weak to combat prejudice. I 'leave it to time and my future conduct 'to clear my innocence; and am re-'ſolved never to give a confirmation to 'thoſe aſperſions which are caſt on my 'character, by ſacrificing my religion 'to my intereſt.

'That poverty, which happily is be-'come my choice, will be my beſt vin-'dication; and, if it affords me no other 'bleſſing but that of a good conſcience, 'it will beſtow on me the higheſt that is 'attainable in this life, and which will 'enable me to bear chearfully all the 'misfortunes that may befal me; among 'which I ſhall always look upon the 'loſs of your eſteem as the greateſt. I 'am, Madam, with all due gratitude 'and reſpect, your obliged and very 'humble ſervant,

'HENRIETTA COURTENEY.'

'I muſt approve, nay, admire your 'reſolution, Miſs,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, returning the letter; 'and, if you perſiſt 'in it, you will appear to me a won-'der.'

'Do you doubt my perſiſting in it?' replied Henrietta.

'When I conſider,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'your birth, your youth, your beauty, 'and the expectations you have been 'encouraged to entertain, I know it 'muſt coſt you a great deal to throw 'away the advantages that are offered 'you, and which poſſibly you might ſe-'cure by temporizing at leaſt.'

'Diſſimulation,' interrupted Henrietta, 'on any occaſion, is mean and 'ſcandalous; but, in matters of religion, 'it is ſurely a heinous crime; and I 'hope I am far enough from commit-'ting it; but I own I have many mo-'tives to ſtimulate my reſolution.

'My own imprudence, and the 'treachery of others, have given a 'wound to my reputation, which a vo-'luntary poverty can only repair. In 'this licentious age, ſhe who, with 'youth, and even the ſlighteſt advan-'tages of perſon, dares to be poor, de-'ſerves ſurely to be thought virtuous; 'and I ſhall ever acknowledge the bounty 'of Providence, that, amidſt the unjuſt 'cenſures which have been caſt on me, 'has made an humble lot my choice.'

'I am ſatisfied,' interrupted Mrs. Willis: 'reaſon, I ſee, has a greater ſhare 'in your ſo lately formed reſolution, 'than the zeal of enthuſiaſm, or the 'ſuggeſtions of vanity; and you may 'believe me a true friend to your fame, 'when I heartily congratulate you on 'your preſent ſituation. And now,

'my dear Miſs, ſuffer me to aſſure you 'of my tendereſt friendſhip; a friend-'ſhip which cannot be contented with 'bare profeſſions, and inſiſts upon your 'putting it to ſome trial.

'Tell me how I can ſerve you? O! 'that you would honour me ſo far as to 'let this houſe be your aſylum till for-'tune does juſtice to your merit. Con-'deſcend to live with me, my dear Miſs, 'and ſhare my little income.'

'You are very kind, dear Mrs. Wil-'lis,' replied Henrietta; 'but my circum-'ſtances will not permit me to continue 'your boarder, and no diſtreſs ſhall ob-'lige me to be burdenſome to a friend. 'I have already reſolved how to diſ-'poſe of myſelf; and, in the ſcheme I 'have formed, I ſhall need your aſſiſt-'ance.'

'Tell me, my dear,' cried Mrs. Willis, eagerly, 'how I can be of any 'uſe to you?'

'You muſt,' replied Henrietta, bluſh-ing a little, 'you muſt get me a ſervice, 'my dear Mrs. Willis.'

'A ſervice!' exclaimed the good wo-man.

'I am very well qualified,' reſumed Henrietta, recovering from her firſt con-fuſion, and ſmiling, 'to wait upon a 'woman of faſhion: for my mother 'gave me a uſeful as well as genteel 'education; and this ſtation will be at 'once private enough to ſecure me from 'diſagreeable accidents, and publick 'enough to make my conduct acquit or 'condemn me.

'I will not,' added ſhe, obſerving Mrs. Willis continued ſilent, 'offer my-'ſelf to any place by my own name; that 'would look like an inſult upon my 'great relations, and be perhaps an ob-'ſtruction to my ſucceſs. It is ſuffi-'cient for me, that, whenever I am diſ-'covered, it may be in circumſtances 'at which they, not I, need be aſham-'ed.'

'When I firſt heard you mention this 'ſcheme,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'I thought 'I could never be brought to approve 'it: but a little reflection has convinced 'me that it may have good conſequences. 'You cannot be long concealed; that 'graceful form will ſoon draw notice 'upon you. Whenever you are known 'to be in a ſtation ſo unworthy your birth 'and merit, the pride of your relations 'will be rouzed. How glorious, then, 'will this humiliation be for you! Me-'thinks I ſee their confuſion for their 'neglect of you, and their eagerneſs to 'repair it, by reſtoring you to the rank 'you was born in. Oh! my dear, you 'will certainly be happy yet, I am ſure 'you will.'

Henrietta ſmiled a little at the good woman's ſanguine expectations; but, in reality, the ſame thoughts had made a great impreſſion upon her, and contri-buted more than ſhe imagined to allay the uneaſineſs ſhe felt at being reduced to take ſuch a ſtep. By degrees ſhe formed in her own mind ſo romantick a ſcene, that ſhe grew impatient to enter upon it, and again intreated the aſſiſtance of Mrs. Willis.

The good woman telling her that a couſin of her huſband's was a ſacque-maker, and in great vogue at the court end of the town, it was agreed that ſhe ſhould go to her, and engage her good offices towards recommending the young lady to a place; it being very likely that, among her cuſtomers, who were moſtly women of quality, ſhe might hear of one that would ſuit her.

CHAP. IV.

WHICH CONTAINS VERY TRIFLING MATTERS.

MRS. Willis ſucceeded beyond her hopes. The mantua-maker had been deſired, by a lady ſhe worked for, to look out for a genteel young perſon to ſerve her in the quality of her woman; and promiſed her couſin, that ſhe would mention her friend to the lady the next day, being to wait on her with ſome cloaths that were to be tried on. She added, that the lady was a citizen, but had an immenſe fortune, and that her place was certainly a very good one.

Henrietta ſeemed very well pleaſed with her landlady's ſucceſs, though ſhe was not free from ſome uneaſy perturbations at the thoughts of the condition ſhe was ſo ſoon to enter upon.

Mrs. Cary did not fail to viſit her couſin the next day. 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have done the young gentlewoman's 'buſineſs: ſhe has nothing to do but to 'wait upon Miſs Cordwain; and, if ſhe 'likes her figure, ſhe will hire her di-'rectly.'

'Why,

'Why, pray,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'what kind of figure will beſt pleaſe this 'lady?'

'Oh!' cried Mrs. Cary, 'Miſs 'Cordwain's woman muſt be very gen-'teel, and look like a gentlewoman; 'the richer ſhe is dreſſed too, when ſhe 'goes to wait on her, the better. Every 'thing about Miſs Cordwain muſt be 'magnificent. Well,' purſued ſhe, laughing, and taking a pinch of ſnuff, which produced ſeveral little pauſes in her diſcourſe, 'it is really ſurpriſing to ſee theſe 'little cits, how they mimick people of 'quality. They muſt be ſo extravagantly in the faſhion. I vow and proteſt, the negligee I tried on Miſs Cordwain to-day had a train three yards 'and a half long.'

Henrietta that moment entering the room, Mrs. Willis, ſeeing her couſin was ſurpriſed at her appearance, ſaid, 'This is the young gentlewoman who 'wants a place.'

The mantua-maker, upon this information, reſumed her familiar look and manner; and, throwing herſelf again upon her chair, took a full ſurvey of the young lady, who thanked her, with ſome heſitation, and a bluſh that crimſoned over her face, for the ſervice ſhe had done her.

'I have juſt been telling my couſin,' ſaid Mrs. Cary, 'that Miſs Cordwain, 'the lady I have recommended you to, 'Ma'am, is very hard to be pleaſed. 'Her woman muſt look like a lady, for-'ſooth: ſhe has refuſed three that went 'to ſee her place; one, becauſe ſhe had 'a red hand; it looked, ſhe ſaid, as if 'the creature had ſtood at a waſh-tub; 'another, becauſe ſhe went to be hired 'in a linen gown; and the third, be-'cauſe ſhe had lived with nobody of 'higher rank than a baronet's wife. 'But I am ſure ſhe can have no objec-'tion to you, Ma'am, unleſs perhaps 'ſhe may think you too handſome. Do 'you take ſnuff, Ma'am?' offering her box, which Henrietta civilly declined.

'But, dear Ma'am,' purſued the mantua-maker, 'who makes your cloaths? 'I never ſaw any thing ſo frightful as 'the ſlope of that ruffle; then ſuch a 'horrid ſleeve: it is well you are natu-'rally genteel.'

Henrietta ſlightly bowed in return for this compliment; and aſked her, at what hour it would be proper to wait upon Miſs Cordwain?

'About one o'clock in the forenoon,' replied Mrs. Cary; 'that's her break-'faſt time. Her father, honeſt man, is 'in his warehouſe before ſix. But this 'is his only daughter; and he expects 'ſhe will be a dutcheſs, or counteſs at 'leaſt. She has fifty thouſand pounds.'

'Where does the lady live?' aſked Henrietta.

'Here, in one of your filthy lanes,' replied the mantua-maker; 'I forgot the 'name of it, but every body knows Mr. 'Cordwain the packer.'

She then roſe up, made one of her beſt curtſies, and hurried into a chair that was waiting for her; for this polite mantua-maker was above viſiting her cuſtomers in a hackney coach: and this inſolence was ſuch a proof of her excellence in her buſineſs, that few ever ſcrupled to pay for it.

CHAP. V.

WHICH SHEWS HENRIETTA IN A NEW SITUATION.

HENRIETTA having ſummoned all her reſolution, that ſhe might acquit herſelf with propriety of the taſk ſhe had undertaken, prepared the next day to wait upon Miſs Cordwain. She remembered the mantua-maker's hint, and therefore avoided any ſtudied ſimplicity in her dreſs; but no apparel, however mean, could have hid that noble air, or diſguiſed that native elegance, ſo conſpicuous throughout her whole perſon.

As ſoon as ſhe was ready, ſhe ſtepped into Mrs. Willis's parlour; and, while a coach was ſent for, aſſumed a more than ordinary chearfulneſs in her diſcourſe with the good woman; for ſhe was extremely deſirous of concealing the emotions ſhe felt upon this mortifying occaſion; and affected a moſt heroick indifference, while only ſhe ſuffered all that a mind, delicate and ſenſible as her's, could feel.

Mrs. Willis followed her to the door with tears in her eyes. The young lady ſtepped into the coach, ſmiled a farewel, and ordered the coachman to drive to Mr. Cordwain's. A few minutes brought her to the houſe; and the ſervant, of whom ſhe enquired if Miſs Cordwain was at home, having ſhewn her into a parlour, bowed and withdrew.

Miſs

Miſs Cordwain being informed that a lady enquired for her, ordered her admittance; and the ſame ſervant returning, conducted Henrietta to her dreſſing-room.

Miſs Cordwain, who was ſtill lingering over her tea-table with a female acquaintance, roſe up at Henrietta's graceful entrance, and, receiving her with a low curtſey, offered her an arm-chair at the upper end of the room.

Henrietta, conſcious of the error ſhe had committed in not making uſe of the mantua-maker's name before, bluſhed a little at this reception, which was not ſuitable to the character ſhe was to appear in; and, declining the chair, 'Mrs. 'Cary, Madam,' ſaid ſhe. She could utter no more than thoſe two words; but they were ſufficient to give Miſs Cordwain to underſtand her buſineſs.

The haughty citizen, exceſſively ſhocked to find ſhe had been betrayed by the figure of Henrietta into ſo improper an inſtance of reſpect, and that the perſon ſhe took for a lady of diſtinction was the young woman who had been recommended to her ſervice; thought to recover the dignity which ſhe conceived ſhe had loſt from this miſtake, by aſſuming an imperious air and an inſolent accent.

'Who did you live with laſt?' ſaid ſhe to Henrietta, throwing herſelf again into her chair, and glancing her over with a ſupercilious eye; 'I hope it was 'with a woman of quality: you will 'not do for me, I can tell you, if you 'have not been uſed to attend upon per-'ſons of rank.'

Henrietta, notwithſtanding the confuſion ſhe was under at acting ſo ſtrange a part, could not help being diverted with the pride of this daughter of trade.

'I am afraid, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'I 'ſhall not be worthy of your place; for 'I never lived in the ſervice of any wo-'man of quality, nor indeed of any 'other.'

'What, you are a gentlewoman, I 'ſuppoſe,' interrupted Miſs Cordwain, drawling out the word *gentlewoman*; 'and now I remember Cary told me you 'had never been in ſervice. Well, that 'does not ſignify: I have no objection 'to your having been a gentlewoman; 'you may be the better ſervant, for what 'I know. For, to ſay the truth,' ſaid ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to her companion, 'thoſe ſort of poor gentlewomen, when 'they are reduced, as they call it, to 'wait upon us, who could buy their 'whole generation, often know their 'diſtance better, and are more humble, 'than ſuch as have been bred to ſer-'vice.'

'Oh!' ſaid the other lady, with an applauding ſmile, 'ever while you live, 'Madam, chuſe a gentlewoman for your 'maid. There is Alderman Jennings 'the grocer's lady: I have heard her 'often declare ſhe never was ſo well 'ſerved as when Colonel Noble's daugh-'ter waited on her. The colonel was 'killed in the laſt war; and, as thoſe 'folks you know have ſeldom any thing 'to leave their families, his fine gay 'daughters were obliged to go to ſervice 'after his death, and did very well; 'but ſomebody left them ten thouſand 'pounds a piece, and ſpoiled two excel-'lent ſervants, by making them gen-'tlewomen again.'

'Nay, if they had fortunes left them,' replied Miſs Cordwain, 'why, you 'know, then, they had a right to be 'called gentlewomen.

'Well, child,' purſued ſhe, turning to Henrietta, 'as I told you before, I 'have no objection to your having been 'a gentlewoman; for I am reſolved 'never to have any other to wait on me: 'I ſhall take you upon Cary's recom-'mendation, and the ſooner you come 'the better.'

Henrietta, who had really enjoyed the converſation that paſſed between theſe two ladies, told her that ſhe would come whenever ſhe pleaſed; and it being agreed ſhe ſhould come the following day, that ſhe might dreſs her new lady for a city-feaſt, ſhe curtſied profoundly low, and withdrew.

Henrietta, whoſe imagination was naturally lively, and not wholly free from thoſe romantick notions which perſons of her age readily admit, began to conſider her transformation from the niece of Lady Meadows, and a preſumptive heireſs, into the waiting maid of a cit, as one of thoſe caprices of fate which never fail to produce ſurpriſing effects. She could not help fancying herſelf the future heroine of ſome affecting tale, whoſe life would be varied with ſurpriſing viciſſitudes of fortune; and that ſhe would at laſt be raiſed to a rank as much above her hopes, as the ſtation ſhe was now entering upon was below all that her fears had ever ſuggeſted.

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Publish'd as the Act directs. by Harrison & Co. Aug.t 1.1787.

But theſe reflections were ſucceeded by others more reaſonable, and which, indeed, afforded her a more ſolid ſatisfaction: ſhe was going to refute the cenſures of an injurious world; to make that innocence, which had been ſo vilely traduced, manifeſt, in her chearful ſubmiſſion to poverty and ſervitude, at a time when a ſhining fortune was offered to purchaſe a change in her religious principles, and when perhaps a little diſſimulation, or a temporary compliance with her aunt's propoſals, might reſtore her to a rank in life ſuitable to her birth.

The ſatisfaction ſhe felt from theſe pleaſing ideas, diffuſed ſuch a ſerenity over her fair face, as agreeably ſurpriſed Mrs. Willis, who had waited her return with impatience.

Henrietta repeated to her the dialogue that had paſſed between the two ladies with ſo much humour, and marked the pride of wealth, and aukward affectation of grandeur and diſtinction, in theſe opulent heireſſes to the laborious gains of ſordid thrift, and perhaps ſucceſsful knavery, with ſuch delicate ſtrokes of ſatire, as convinced Mrs. Willis ſhe would not be an injudicious obſerver of the manners of thoſe whom it might be her lot to aſſociate with, nor paſs through this new ſcene of life without drawing improvement from it.

The good woman was grieved to find that ſhe muſt loſe her ſo ſoon; but, being fully perſuaded that this humiliating ſtep would terminate in ſomething happy for her fair friend, ſhe diſpoſed herſelf to part with her chearfully.

It was agreed between them, that the elder Mr. Damer ſhould not be made acquainted with any part of his ſon's behaviour with regard to Henrietta, till his return from Holland, when the whole affair might be laid candidly before him; and that the younger ſhould be told, that ſhe was gone into ſervice; but where, he was not to be informed.

The next day Henrietta, after taking a tender farewel of Mrs. Willis, repaired to her new dwelling. Miſs Cordwain was juſt gone out to make ſome little purchaſes for the evening; and Henrietta, being directed to go into her lady's dreſſing-room, was met by her predeceſſor, who had lingered in the houſe to have an opportunity of ſpeaking to her, that, according to the general cuſtom of ſervants, ſhe might prejudice her againſt her new miſtreſs.

From this girl, who was not ſparing in her invectives, ſhe learned that Miſs Cordwain's temper, which was not naturally good, was extremely ſoured of late by a diſappointment in love; that the packer, her father, had been treating with a certain nobleman for a match between her and the nobleman's eldeſt ſon; but that it had been broke off, becauſe the citizen had refuſed to lay down more than thirty thouſand pounds with his daughter, and the nobleman inſiſted upon forty.

This little piece of hiſtory was followed by a thouſand other family anecdotes; to all which Henrietta liſtened in ſilence, and was not ſorry that the cenſorious waiting-woman, whoſe tongue had, during a whole hour, run with ſurpriſing volubility, was at length ſilenced by the arrival of Miſs Cordwain, whoſe voice when ſhe heard on the ſtairs, ſhe took a haſty leave, and retreated through a different door from that which the lady entered.

Miſs Cordwain, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw Henrietta, ſlightly inclined her head, in return to her reſpectful curtſey; and throwing ſome millinery trifles upon her toilet, ſat down to her glaſs, and ordered her new woman to comb her hair, ſhewing a fretful impatience at her hair-dreſſer's long delay; for ſhe was to meet her company at nine o'clock, and it was now almoſt four: ſo that ſhe had good reaſon to fear ſhe ſhould hardly have time enough to dreſs.

While Henrietta was acquitting herſelf handily enough of this taſk, her lady took up a collection of ſongs that lay upon her table, that ſhe might improve her mind while her body was adorning; and, after reading intently a few moments to herſelf, ſhe haſtily turned over the leaves to a place that was doubled down, and began to read aloud a moſt piteous complaint of a deſpairing nymph, whoſe lover had forſaken her for another: ſhe concluded this doleful ditty with a deep ſigh; and repeating the burden of it, *for men are as falſe as the changeable wind*, 'Henrietta,' ſaid ſhe, 'was you ever 'in love?'

Our fair heroine, who underſtood this queſtion as a prelude to a confidence from her miſtreſs, was at ſome loſs how to anſwer it, when ſhe was relieved from her

her perplexity by the arrival of Monſieur Fineſſe, the French hair-cutter.

Miſs Cordwain, immediately dropping her tender languiſhments, aſſumed a ſupercilious air; and, after haughtily interrogating the ingenious artiſt for not coming ſooner, ſubmitted her treſſes to his forming hands, a ſettled gloom all the time clouding her face: for, whether it was that her glaſs, on which her eyes were intently fixed, told her ſome unpleaſing truths, or that her gentle boſom heaved with ſome ſecret diſcontent, it is certain that every thing diſpleaſed her; nor could all Henrietta's obliging attention to the adorning her perſon draw a ſmile of approbation from her.

After five hours labour, however, the lady was compleatly dreſſed. Her father, who had not ſeen her ſince dinner, which ſhe had ſwallowed in haſte, having ſo much buſineſs on her hands, now entered the room; and liking the ſhewy appearance ſhe made, 'Why, Molly,' ſaid he, 'you are as fine as a 'dutcheſs.'

'As fine as a dutcheſs,' repeated ſhe, pouting, 'and why not?'

'Very true, girl,' replied the father, 'thou haſt that which can make dutcheſ-'ſes: but, Molly, I have ſomething to 'ſay to thee in private; ſo ſend your 'waiting maid away.'

Henrietta immediately retired into her miſtreſs's bed-chamber; which being only ſeparated from the dreſſing-room by a ſlight partition of wainſcot, ſhe could not avoid hearing every thing that paſſed.

'I have had a propoſal made me this 'afternoon,' reſumed the father, 'and 'I came to acquaint you with it. Mr. 'Harris has aſked you in marriage; 'there's immenſe riches for you, girl: 'what ſay you?'

'Sure, papa,' cried Miſs Cordwain haſtily, 'you have not given him any 'encouragement, have you? A fine 'match, indeed! ſo I muſt be called 'plain Mrs. Harris all my days, and 'there's Miſs Jennings married to a 'viſcount, and has coronets upon her 'coach: three weeks ago, Miſs Collins, 'the broker's daughter, became a coun-'teſs; and but this very morning I 'heard that the Duke of —— is court-'ing Miſs Rogers, our neighbour the 'ſoap-boiler's niece, and ſhe has but 'twenty thouſand pounds. I can't 'bear it; ſo, I can't,' purſued Miſs Cordwain, burſting into tears, 'to ſee 'all my comrades at Hackney boarding-'ſchool married to right honourables, 'and I am not likely to be even a paltry 'baronet's wife.'

Here her tears and ſobs ſuppreſſed any farther utterance, and had ſuch an effect upon the fond father, that he alſo was ready to cry.

'Don't break my heart, Molly,' ſaid he, half-ſobbing; 'you know it is death 'to me to ſee you fret and grieve yourſelf: 'Are you not my only child? Is it not 'for you that I have been toiling and 'labouring for theſe forty years, up early 'and down late, ſcraping all I can to-'gether, gaining much and ſpending 'little, and all to make you a peereſs 'of Great Britain; and a peereſs you 'ſhall be: ſo don't cry, my girl, and 'ſpoil your complexion; neither neigh-'bour Jennings, nor neighbour Col-'lins's daughter, ſhall be greater than 'you. You ſhall be a counteſs, Molly, 'will that content you? I will lay down 'the odd ten thouſand that the Earl 'of —— and I quarrelled about, and 'you ſhall have his ſon.'

'I am obliged to you, papa,' ſaid Miſs Cordwain; 'but——'

'Nay,' interrupted the father, 'I 'find nothing will pleaſe you: you were 'crying juſt now, becauſe you were not 'a counteſs; and when I tell you that 'I will part with another ten thouſand 'pounds, to make you eaſy, you come 'with your buts.'

'Why, ſuppoſe I am a counteſs,' replied Miſs Cordwain, 'will not Miſs 'Collins be a dutcheſs, and take place 'of me? I can never endure that.'

'What ſignifies her taking place of 'you?' ſaid her father, 'the duke's eſtate 'is not half ſo good as the Earl of ——; 'beſides, you refuſed a duke, you know, 'and you have often told me that you 'like Lord B—— better than any man 'in the world, and how have you pined 'ſince the match was broke off!'

'Well, I confeſs,' replied Miſs, 'that 'I do like my Lord B——, and would 'rather marry him than any duke in the 'land, provided that little odious thing, 'Miſs Collins, did not marry above me: 'ſhe to be called her Grace at every 'word, while I am only Lady B——; 'I ſhould die with vexation.'

'Since it is ſo,' ſaid the father, 'I 'ſhall lay aſide my deſign, and maken 'advances to the earl.'

'And

'And then his ſon will marry ſome-
'body elſe,' cried Miſs Cordwain.

'What would the girl be at?' interrupted the good man, with ſome heat; 'if you won't have him, need you care 'who has?'

Miſs Cordwain now burſt into a flood of tears: ſhe liked Lord B——, but ſhe could not bear the thoughts of Miſs Collins being in a rank above her; and love and envy raiſed ſuch tumults in her breaſt, as made her ſeek a relief in tears.

'I wiſh you knew your own mind, 'girl,' ſaid the father, half angry, and half concerned at her grief.

'I know my own mind well enough,' replied Miſs, ſullenly: 'I would marry 'Lord B——, and I would not have 'that proud minx be a dutcheſs.'

'Take my word for it,' ſaid the father, 'ſhe will never be Dutcheſs of——; 'I know her fortune is not ſufficient to 'clear the duke's eſtate of two mort-'gages that have almoſt ſwallowed it 'up.'

'Nay, then,' interrupted Miſs Cordwain, who eagerly admitted an argument that ſet her mind at eaſe, 'I am 'ſure the duke will not have her; for 'ſhe is ſo ugly, you know, papa, that 'nothing could charm him but her 'riches.'

'Well,' ſaid the father, ſmiling with pleaſure to ſee her in good humour again, 'I am to meet a friend of the earl's to-'night; ſhall this affair be brought on 'again?'

'As you pleaſe, papa,' ſaid Miſs Cordwain, curtſeying; 'you know it is 'my duty to be obedient.'

'Aye,' ſaid the good man, kiſſing her, 'you have always been one of the 'moſt dutiful children in the world; and 'I will make thee a lady, though I don't 'leave myſelf a ſhilling.' With this wiſe declaration he quitted the room, leaving his daughter in high ſpirits; who, after ſhe had called her maid to adjuſt whatever might be amiſs in her dreſs, and taken a full ſurvey of herſelf in the glaſs, ſtepped into her coach, with the air of a citizen who has a fortune of forty thouſand pounds.

CHAP. VI.

CONTAINS AN INCIDENT WHICH THE SAGACIOUS READER HAS PROBABLY FORESEEN.

HENRIETTA, when ſhe was left alone, found ſufficient matter for reflection in the ſentiments and behaviour of this wealthy tradeſman and his daughter; and as it was now become neceſſary, for her own peace of mind, to reconcile herſelf to the ſituation that fortune had placed her in, ſhe endeavoured to extract uſeful leſſons from every ſcene that paſſed under her obſervation.

'Why have I lamented my poverty?' ſaid ſhe to herſelf; 'riches neither give 'underſtanding to the mind, nor ele-'gance to the perſon. How mean is 'Miſs Cordwain with forty thouſand 'pounds! what narrow notions! what 'ſelfiſh paſſions! how ignorant! how 'contemptible!—All the advantages 'her large fortune procures her, is a 'title and a coronet: honours how deſpi-'cable, when ſuch as Miſs Cordwain 'wear them!

'Let me thank Heaven, then, that 'made my father a younger brother; 'that he inherited the virtues and ele-'vated ſentiments of his noble anceſtors, 'and wanted that allurement to upſtart 'wealth, which might have given me 'a Miſs Cordwain for a mother, and 'have deprived me of thoſe generous 'precepts, and thoſe bright examples, 'by which I have been taught to think 'poverty a leſs evil than diſhonour; and 'that a peaceful conſcience is cheaply 'purchaſed with the loſs of every world-'ly advantage.'

Theſe were her reflections, as ſhe afterwards declared to her friend. It is not therefore ſurpriſing that, with ſuch ſentiments, our fair heroine found herſelf tranquil in her humble ſtation, and dignified misfortune by her graceful reſignation to it.

If the woman ſhe ſerved had had judgment enough to diſtinguiſh merit, and goodneſs enough to love it, Henrietta muſt have engaged her attention and her kindneſs: but little minds like nothing but what reſembles themſelves.

Miſs Cordwain ſometimes condeſcended to enter into a converſation with her woman, but was quickly diſguſted with the difference of their notions; and what ſhe could not comprehend, ſhe either deſpiſed as folly, or ſuſpected as artifice.

They were upon theſe terms when

Mr. Cordwain acquainted his daughter, that they were invited to ſpend a week at the Earl of ——'s country-ſeat; for the conteſted ten thouſand pounds being granted by the citizen, the treaty of marriage was renewed; and this viſit was propoſed in order to bring the young people together again with ſome kind of decorum.

Miſs Cordwain, in high ſpirits, gave her woman notice to make preparations for this little journey; which done, Henrietta went to take leave of her faithful Mrs. Willis.

'What a triumph would mine be,' ſaid ſhe to her friend, 'if any of my 'relations ſhould happen to be at this 'nobleman's ſeat, and behold me in 'the character of Miſs Cordwain's ſer-'vant!'

'You have done right, my dear,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'to call it a triumph; 'for ſo indeed it would be, the triumph 'of virtue over pride and prejudice.'

The good woman informed her, that her guardian was in a very ill ſtate of health, and was gone to Montpelier, in conſequence of his phyſician's advice: that the young man had been there to wait upon her; and that, when he heard of the reſolution ſhe had taken, he affected to think himſelf extremely injured by her conduct, as it ſhewed the utmoſt contempt of his advice and friendſhip: 'but it was eaſy to perceive,' added Mrs. Willis, 'that there was more grief than 'anger in the reproaches he threw out 'againſt you upon this occaſion. He 'ſeemed much mortified at my refuſing 'to tell him where you was, but owned 'that his wife made him very uneaſy 'upon your account; and when I urged 'that as an argument againſt the pro-'priety of your ſeeing him, his ſilence 'acknowledged me in the right.'

Henrietta was ſenſibly affected with the news of her guardian's illneſs; and, ſince his return was now uncertain, ſhe reſolved to write to him immediately, and give him an account of all that had happened to her ſince he went abroad, fearing that, unleſs ſhe explained the reaſons of her conduct, he might be prejudiced againſt her by her aunt's repreſentations of it. She would not give him any diſquiet, by mentioning his ſon's behaviour, but left that to be unravelled by time.

Mrs. Willis having promiſed to get this letter ſafely tranſmitted to Mr. Damer, Henrietta took a tender leave of her, and returned home.

The next morning, very early, the coach and ſix was at the door. Miſs Cordwain impatiently ſtepped in, for ſhe thought every moment an age till ſhe ſaw her noble lover again; her face dreſſed in ſmiles of pleaſing expectation, and her heart exulting with the conſciouſneſs of her own worth, which, by her father's conceſſion of the diſputed thouſands, had received ſuch a conſiderable addition: but being, as before obſerved, not very happy in the frame of her temper, this ſun-ſhine of ſatisfaction was ſoon clouded at being obliged to wait a few minutes for her father, whoſe ſlowneſs but ill ſuited with her eager impatience.

Indeed the wary citizen, having wiſely conſidered that they had a journey to perform of at leaſt twenty miles, was buſied in packing up ſome neceſſary refreſhments, that they might not be famiſhed by the way. For this purpoſe, he had cauſed a neat's tongue, a cake of ginger-bread, two or three pounds of almonds and raiſins, and a bottle of ſack, to be provided; and he himſelf brought the baſket in which they were depoſited to the coach, directing Henrietta to get in firſt, that he might place it ſafely in her lap; which done, he took his ſeat next his daughter, and ordered the coachman to drive.

Miſs Cordwain's ill humour inſenſibly wearing off, they purſued their journey with great ſatisfaction, not having baited above three or four times on the road.

At length the young lady's eyes were delighted with the proſpect of the magnificent villa, which ſhe expected one day to be miſtreſs of; but her attention was ſoon called off that object by the preſence of her lover, who, being juſt returned from a little excurſion on horſeback, alighted as ſoon as he ſaw the coach ſtop, and advanced to help his miſtreſs out.

The young lord preſented his hand to Miſs Cordwain with an air of forced gallantry; but happening to glance his eyes towards Henrietta, he ſtarted back in great ſurprize.

Miſs Cordwain, vexed at the attention with which he gazed upon her woman, jumped out of the coach, before he had ſufficiently recovered himſelf to be able to offer her again the hand which, in his confuſion, he had withdrawn.

The

The lady having on a capuchin, which ſhe had wore during the journey, untied it, and toſſing it into the coach to Henrietta, bid her, in an imperious tone, take care of it.

This action and theſe words gave the young nobleman to underſtand that our beauteous heroine was actually the ſervant of Miſs Cordwain: a circumſtance which furniſhed him with new matter for wonder; and indeed this encounter gave him ſo much perplexity, and ſo entirely engroſſed his thoughts, that the old tradeſman (who enquired after my good lord and my good lady's health, with as many bows and ſcrapes as would have ſerved any trader to expreſs his acknowledgment to a cuſtomer whom he had juſt cheated) was obliged to repeat his queſtions ſeveral times before he could procure an anſwer.

As for Henrietta, ſhe had, upon the firſt ſight of this young nobleman, whom ſhe immediately knew to be the ſame perſon that had lodged at Mrs. Eccles's, been under ſome confuſion, leſt he ſhould accoſt her as an acquaintance before the lady on whom ſhe attended; but obſerving that, from Miſs Cordwain's behaviour, he underſtood her ſituation, and took no farther notice of her than by a ſide glance, which he gave her, full of paſſionate concern, ſhe was relieved from her fears; and, far from being diſcompoſed at the character ſhe appeared in, ſhe acquitted herſelf of the little duties of her ſtation with the moſt graceful eaſe; gave her lady her fan, received her commands, and, with a little French trunk in her hand that contained ſome laces and linen, followed her to the houſe at a reſpectful diſtance.

Lord B——'s emotions at this unexpected meeting with Henrietta, having now in ſome degree ſubſided, he entertained his miſtreſs as they walked with his uſual vivacity and politeneſs; but could not help often turning to ſnatch a look at her fair attendant, whoſe charms in that humble ſtation, a ſtation ſo unworthy of her birth and ſhining merit, acquired a pathetick power that melted him to a tenderneſs he had never known before.

He conducted the lady and her father to the apartment of the counteſs his mother; and, taking the firſt opportunity to leave them, retired to his own, that he might be at liberty to reflect upon his adventure.

To know that the woman, whom all his moſt diligent enquiries for ſo many weeks could never diſcover, was in the ſame houſe with him, was a circumſtance that afforded him infinite ſatisfaction; but he ſaw no probability of turning this circumſtance to the advantage of his deſigns upon her. For, with what face could he plead his paſſion to one of her delicacy, while he was publickly addreſſing another?

The ſervile condition he ſaw her in was a bar to his hopes. She who, with ſuch uncommon attractions, could reſolve to be poor, muſt needs be incorruptible. What allurement could riches throw out for a woman who knew no other pride but the pride of virtue?

He could not hope to make an impreſſion upon her heart by the diſguiſe of honourable love. She muſt needs know the terms he was upon with Miſs Cordwain; and was afraid that ſhe already deſpiſed him for the meanneſs of ſuch a choice.

It was indeed ſtill in his power to throw ſuch obſtacles in the way of this match, as to defer, if not break it entirely, but he could not reſolve to make ſuch a ſacrifice to love: he would have married Henrietta with half Miſs Cordwain's fortune; and was amazed at the violence of his paſſion, when he conſidered the prodigious diſproportion between twenty and forty thouſand pounds. Yet moſt ſincerely did he wiſh his generoſity could have been put to this trial; and, in the violence of his grief at the apparent impoſſibility that this ſhould ever happen, a thouſand times did he curſe the malevolence of fate, that united ſo many virtues and graces in one lovely woman, and denied her wealth; which, however, by his preference of Miſs Cordwain, he tacitly acknowledged was worth them all.

A whole hour's labour of thought and reflection left Lord B—— in the ſame ſtate of anxious doubt and ſolicitude he was in when he firſt entered upon this examination of his own heart; and all he could be certain of, in this confuſion of ideas and oppoſing ſentiments, was, that the unexpected ſight of Miſs Courteney had charmed him more than ever; and following the impulſe of his paſſion, without knowing whither it would conduct him, or what it would terminate in, he anxiouſly lay in wait for ſome opportunity of ſpeaking to her

in private, which he found when he leaſt expected it.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE AGAIN APPEARS VERY FOOLISH.

MEAN time our lovely heroine, who had been received by the counteſs's woman with prodigious ceremony, and had, during a whole hour, liſtened with ſmiling attention to all the impertinences ſhe uttered, was at length relieved from the fatigue of ſuch converſation, and, with a profuſion of compliments, conducted to a chamber contiguous to that of her miſtreſs. As ſoon as ſhe was left alone, ſhe began to conſider how ſhe ſhould extricate herſelf from the difficulties her unexpected meeting with Lord B—— had involved her in.

Her delicacy was ſhocked at the thoughts of remaining in the houſe with a man who had made an attempt upon her honour, eſpecially in the ſituation ſhe now was; a ſituation that would ſeem to invite his future attacks: and, though he might well impute their meeting to the fantaſtick effects of chance, yet he would not fail to conſtrue her ſtay into a tacit encouragement of that paſſion he had profeſſed for her at parting, the diſhonourable purport of which was evident from the engagements he had entered into with Miſs Cordwain.

She reflected alſo on the cenſures under which her character laboured at preſent; and was juſtly apprehenſive that, when this part of her ſtory was known, the malicious world would not fail to inſinuate that ſhe threw herſelf into Lord B——'s way, and the inferences that would be drawn from ſuch a ſuppoſed conduct muſt needs be highly diſadvantageous to her.

But, on the other hand, how could ſhe quit Miſs Cordwain's ſervice ſo abruptly, without giving occaſion for ſtrange conjectures, and ſetting the tongue of malice looſe to aſſign reaſons for her behaviour, very different from the truth?

However, the inconveniencies which might attend this ſtep were light, compared with thoſe ſhe foreſaw from expoſing herſelf voluntarily to the purſuits of a young libertine, whoſe eyes, in this laſt interview, had ſpoken too plainly to leave her in doubt of his ſentiments.

She therefore reſolved to go away the next day; and, as ſoon as ſhe was ſummoned to the toilet, acquainted Miſs Cordwain with her intention.

Henrietta was a ſcrupulous obſerver of truth, and would not on this occaſion violate it, by forming any plauſible excuſe for her ſudden determination; ſo that Miſs Cordwain, in whoſe breaſt the ſtings of jealouſy had been rouzed by the paſſionate glances Lord B—— had darted at her maid, began to entertain ſtrange ſuſpicions from ſo unexpected an overture; and, in a peremptory tone, demanded to know her reaſons for quitting her ſervice in ſuch a manner.

Henrietta, with great ſweetneſs, aſſured her that ſhe did not deſire to be diſmiſſed in conſequence of any diſcontent, but that the neceſſity of her affairs obliged her to return immediately to town.

'Your affairs!' ſaid Miſs Cordwain, with a haughty ſneer; 'I vow it is 'mighty pretty to hear ſervants talk of 'their affairs, as if they really had any 'concerns of more conſequence than the 'duty they owe their principals. I wonder you don't tell me you have half a 'dozen engagements in town,' purſued ſhe, laughing aloud; 'ſuch a ſpeech 'would become you mightily: but 'pr'ythee, go, creature; pack up your 'rags in a ſheet of brown paper, and 'take yourſelf away. I ſuppoſe you 'have found out a new method of living, leſs mortifying to your pride of 'beggarly gentility than waiting upon 'a woman of fortune; and I doubt not 'but you will be ſhortly ſeen flaunting 'it in publick places with a flimſy ſack, 'a painted face, and all the trappings 'of your trade.'

To this coarſe abuſe Henrietta liſtened in ſilence, beholding her imperious miſtreſs all the time with ſuch a calm, but ſteady eye, as called up a bluſh in thoſe cheeks which had been before overſpread with a livid paleneſs.

Not that ſhe felt any remorſe for the reproaches ſhe had uttered, or was aſhamed of her indecent tranſports; but Henrietta's ſoft compoſure, the dignity of her ſilence, and the energetick expreſſion in her eyes, ſtruck a kind of awe into her mean-ſouled adverſary; and, inly raging at the inferiority ſhe was conſcious

conſcious of, ſhe commanded her to be gone from her preſence.

Henrietta inſtantly obeyed, and, meeting the counteſs's woman as ſhe went out of the room, ſhe begged her to ſend a ſervant to the neareſt inn to hire a poſt-chaiſe for her, being reſolved to return to London that very day.

This well-bred Abigail expreſſed great concern that ſhe was ſo ſoon to loſe the honour of her company; and aſked, with an appearance of anxiety, if ſhe was not to return again?

Henrietta replied in the negative: at which the other ſeemed wonderfully ſurprized, though ſhe was not ignorant of all that had paſſed between Henrietta and her lady; for, hearing Miſs Cordwain's voice very loud, ſhe had applied her ear to the key-hole, and needed no farther information.

Our fair heroine having evaded the artful queſtions of this prying woman, and diſcouraged her reflections on her own lady, whom, in her general invective againſt the pride and caprice of miſtreſſes, ſhe did not ſpare, told her, ſhe would have the pleaſure of viewing the fine gardens that belonged to the houſe before ſhe went away; and Mrs. Smith promiſed to join her, as ſoon as ſhe had executed the commiſſion ſhe was charged with.

Henrietta accordingly repaired to the gardens, full of reflections upon the ſcene that had lately paſſed. She entered a little covered alley that led to a grotto, which ſhe had an inclination to take a view of; when, hearing the ſound of ſteps behind her, ſhe looked back, ſuppoſing it was Mrs. Smith; but was not a little ſurprized to find it was Lord B——, who, ſeeing her croſs the terrace from his chamber-window, had followed her thither.

Henrietta, rightly judging that this encounter was not merely accidental, turned her ſteps from the grotto, and ſtruck into a leſs private walk. Lord B——, perceiving her intention, croſſed immediately and met her, bowing profoundly low, and, with an air as reſpectful as if he was acoſting a dutcheſs, enquired after her health.

Henrietta, not at all flattered by this inſtance of reſpect, which he by whom it was paid conſidered as an act of ſupererogation, and that it would affect her accordingly, returned his compliment with the moſt graceful eaſe; and, ſmiling, told him, he muſt not now conſider her as Miſs Courteney, but the ſervant of Miſs Cordwain.

'O that horrid appellation!' cried he: 'What violence did I not do myſelf to 'behave to you as I did this morning! 'But tell me, for Heaven's ſake, Ma-'dam, what has occaſioned this tranſ-'formation?'

'My aunt's continued diſpleaſure,' replied Henrietta. 'Your lordſhip has 'perhaps heard what circumſtances my 'father died in: the ſtation therefore in 'which you ſee me, ought not to be 'called a transformation; it is what I 'was born to, ſince I was born in in-'digence.'

'I cannot bear to hear you talk thus,' interrupted Lord B——; 'how could 'you think of ſubjecting yourſelf to a 'condition ſo unworthy of you, when 'you knew there was a man in the 'world that would have died to ſerve 'you!'

'I am not of a temper,' ſaid Henrietta, 'to be eaſy under great obliga-'tions; and ſervitude is, in my opinion, 'leſs ſhocking than dependence.'

'Why do you talk of obligations,' ſaid Lord B——: 'love knows no pro-'perty; could you doubt that my for-'tune would be at your command? 'Suffer me, I conjure you,' purſued he, 'to ſnatch you from this unworthy ſitu-'ation; can riches be better employed 'than in ſupporting her I love?'

'My lord,' interrupted Henrietta, her face glowing with indignation, 'this is 'an inſult I could not have expected 'from one of your rank and politeneſs: 'I am fallen very low indeed, when a 'man, who is upon the point of mar-'riage with another, dares talk to me 'of love.'

'There are certain engagements,' replied Lord B——, a little confuſed at the air with which ſhe uttered theſe words, 'in which the heart has no part.'

'Very likely,' interrupted Henrietta; 'but it is ſufficient for me to know, that 'the engagements your lordſhip has en-'tered into leave you not the liberty 'of addreſſing me in this manner: and 'I look upon the profeſſions you make 'me as the higheſt inſult upon my diſ-'treſs.'

Lord B——, notwithſtanding he found in this juſtifiable haughtineſs the ruin of his

his hopes, could not help admiring a mind ſo rightly turned; humble with ſuch propriety, and proud only when condeſcenſion would be meanneſs.

'This is not a time,' ſaid he, 'to tell you how far I am bound by thoſe 'engagements you ſpeak of; but, whatever they are, they ought not to deprive me of the happineſs of doing you 'ſervice.'

'I am obliged to you, my lord,' ſaid Henrietta; 'but, at preſent, the greateſt 'ſervice you can do me is to take no 'notice of me.'

In ſpeaking theſe words, ſhe curtſied, and would have left him; but he, not able to part with her thus, ſnatched her hand.

'You muſt not leave me,' ſaid he, 'till you promiſe to give me an opportunity of ſpeaking to you more fully. 'Oh, how I love you!' cried he, gazing on her paſſionately.

'Again this inſulting declaration!' interrupted Henrietta, pulling her hand from him, and giving him a look full of ſcorn and anger as ſhe turned away.

'Hear me, Madam,' cried he, purſuing her: 'ſuffer me, in the character 'of your friend, to offer you my ſervices. 'My mother was formerly acquainted 'with Lady Meadows: if it will be of 'any uſe to you, I will engage her to renew it, and offer her mediation betwixt 'your aunt and you. You muſt not, 'by Heaven you muſt not, continue 'longer in ſo ſhocking a ſituation!'

This propoſal, and the earneſt manner in which it was made, drew Henrietta's attention: angry as ſhe was, ſhe thought it merited a civil return.

'Doubt not, my lord,' ſaid ſhe, her charming eyes recovering their uſual ſweetneſs, 'that I ſhould be glad to con'ſider you in the character of a friend: 'and the offer you now make me is ſoobliging, that I cannot diſpenſe with myſelf from telling you my reaſons for 'declining it.'

She then, in a few words, acquainted him with the purport of her aunt's letter to her: 'Such are the terms,' added ſhe, 'upon which a reconciliation with my 'aunt can be only effected; therefore, 'the counteſs's interpoſition in my favour, were ſhe diſpoſed to grant it, 'would be of no uſe.'

Lord B——, having before fully informed himſelf of every thing relating to Miſs Courteney, no ſooner heard that, for ſo trifling a compliance as the change of her religion, it was in her power to ſecure Lady Meadows's eſtate to herſelf, which he knew to be very conſiderable, than he thought fit to alter his ſtyle, and declared that the affair between Miſs Cordwain and him was not carried ſo far as to take from him the liberty of following his inclinations, and of offering her his hand; he begged her therefore to favour him with another interview in the morning, when he would explain himſelf farther.

Henrietta perceiving the counteſs's woman approaching, and unwilling to leave him in doubt with regard to her ſentiments upon this new propoſal, thus anſwered haſtily:

'My lord, this can never be; there 'are many obſtacles againſt it; you will 'find it very difficult to ſurmount thoſe 'your own family will throw in your 'way; but, ſuppoſe that could be done, 'my ſcruples will raiſe others leſs eaſy 'perhaps to be overcome.'

She left him when ſhe had ſaid theſe few words, and went to meet Mrs. Smith, who told her ſhe had procured a vehicle for her, and that it would be at the back gate in leſs than an hour; 'but,' continued ſhe, 'there is a ſtrange con'fuſion within; have you ſeen your lady?'

Henrietta told her ſhe had not.

'God knows what is the matter,' ſaid Mrs. Smith; 'ſhe went into the garden 'to look for you, as I imagined, and returned a few minutes ago with a moſt 'wrathful countenance: her father and 'ſhe confabulated together, and then 'went into my lord's dreſſing-room; 'and Mr. Jauvert, my lord's gentleman, 'told me that the old man ſeemed to be 'very uneaſy.'

Henrietta had no time to make any reflections upon what ſhe heard; for a ſervant that moment came to tell Mrs. Smith, that her lady had ſent him to look for her, and deſired that ſhe would bring Miſs Cordwain's woman to her apartment.

Henrietta, though a little ſurprized, followed Mrs. Smith with great chearfulneſs, who deſired her to wait in the anti-chamber while ſhe went to acquaint her lady with her being there; where we will leave her for a few moments, till the reader is informed of the accident that occaſioned this ſummons.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

WHICH CONTAINS A CURIOUS DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EARL AND THE CITIZEN.

MISS Cordwain, who, in the notice Lord B—— took of Henrietta, found matter ſufficient for jealouſy and uneaſineſs, entertained the moſt injurious ſuſpicions, when ſhe heard her woman's ſudden reſolution to return to London; and having driven her from her preſence with a torrent of abuſive language, vented her rage in tears as ſoon as ſhe was gone.

She reproached herſelf with her folly, in diſmiſſing her ſo readily; when, by obliging her to ſtay, ſhe might have gueſſed her deſigns, or perhaps have obtained a more certain knowledge of them.

Her miſchievous imagination, being now upon the ſtretch to find ſome expedient for protracting her departure, at laſt preſented her with one, which ſhe reſolved to make uſe of.

She hid a diamond bracelet; and then rung her bell for Henrietta, with an intention to tell her that ſhe could not find it, and inſiſt upon her producing it before ſhe left the earl's.

Mrs. Smith, who was that moment paſſing by her apartment, and knew that Henrietta was not in the way, ſtepped in, to know what ſhe wanted. Miſs Cordwain aſked for her maid; and being told that ſhe was walking in the garden, haſtened thither immediately, not more delighted with the opportunity ſhe now had of putting a ſtop to her journey, than of affronting her with the ſuſpicion of theft.

As ſhe deſcended the terrace, her eyes were blaſted with the ſight of her maid at a diſtance in earneſt diſcourſe with her lover.

At this confirmation of her ſuſpicions, ſhe ran back like a fury into the houſe; and meeting her father, who had juſt left the earl in his dreſſing-room, told him, that they were invited only to be affronted; that Henrietta was Lord B—'s miſtreſs; that he had taken her out of her ſervice; and that ſhe was going back to London that very night, at his requeſt.

The old man, without ſtaying to enquire farther, or reflecting upon the extreme improbability of this ſtory, ſwore that never a lord in the land ſhould uſe his daughter ill; and ſtrode back to the earl's apartment, while Miſs Cordwain retired to her own, meditating vengeance on thoſe that had ſo cruelly injured her.

Mr. Cordwain, who had promiſed himſelf to ſpeak to the earl in very high terms, was no ſooner in his preſence, than he ſunk into that littleneſs which mere monied men are ſo conſcious of with perſons of birth and politeneſs. However, he aſſumed courage enough to tell his lordſhip, that he had ſomething to ſay to him in private.

The earl, obſerving that his features were ruffled, was a little ſurprized; but diſmiſſed his gentleman immediately, though he was not quite dreſſed; and then, with a complaiſant ſmile, deſired the citizen to let him know his commands.

'I am a plain man, my lord,' ſaid Mr. Cordwain; 'I don't underſtand fine 'compliments and breeding, though I 'don't want for manners neither; and 'I am ſure I have always been very civil 'to your lordſhip; and I did not expect 'that your lordſhip would have invited 'my girl and I here to ſcoff at us. My 'lord, I can give my girl forty thouſand 'pounds, which is what few lords can 'ſay, let me tell you that; and withal I 'am an honeſt man, though I have forty 'thouſand pounds more in my pocket, 'perhaps: but no matter for that, I am 'not proud of my riches.'

'Mr. Cordwain,' ſaid his lordſhip, wondering to what this eloquent harangue tended, 'I hope nothing has 'happened to give you any diſguſt? 'Upon my honour, I have the higheſt 'eſteem for you, and I think I give a 'proof of it by being ſo deſirous of 'your alliance; but I am at a loſs to 'comprehend your meaning, when you 'talk of my having invited you and 'your daughter here to affront you. 'Miſs Cordwain is a moſt accompliſhed 'young lady, and my ſon has too much 'judgment not to be as ſenſible as he 'ought of her merits.'

'Indeed,' interrupted Mr. Cordwain, 'my daughter is in my eye a very comely young woman; and I will never 'give her to any man, though he were a 'duke or a prince, that would keep a 'miſtreſs under her noſe, as one may ſay.'

'You aſtoniſh me, Mr. Cordwain,' replied his lordſhip: 'have you any reaſon to ſuſpect that my ſon is a libertine?'

'My

'My lord,' returned Mr. Cordwain, 'I am no ſcholar, I don't underſtand 'hard words; I have had learning 'enough to ſcrape a few thouſands to-'gether, and that is ſufficient for me. 'Your lordſhip's ſon may be a libertine 'for what I can tell, that's neither here 'nor there; but I am ſure he is a ter-'rible rake: and what tender father,' purſued he, almoſt in tears, 'would 'marry his child to a rake, to have all 'the fruits of his toil and labour, for 'thirty years and upwards, ſquandered 'away upon lewd women?'

'Sure, Mr. Cordwain,' interrupted his lordſhip, with a ſterner accent, 'you 'do not imagine my ſon capable of act-'ing ſo diſhonourably! His principles, 'Mr. Cordwain——'

'Nay, nay, my lord,' reſumed the citizen, 'I have nothing to ſay againſt 'his principles: he is no Jacobite, I 'dare engage; but he is a rake, my 'lord, that is my objection to him, and 'rakes are very bad huſbands.'

'My ſon,' ſaid the peer, 'may have 'had ſome youthful follies; but I am 'ſure Miſs Cordwain's beauty and good 'ſenſe will fix his heart.'

'And does your lordſhip really think 'my girl a beauty?' ſaid the fond fa-ther, his eyes gliſtening with pleaſure. 'Indeed I always thought ſo; but fa-'thers, my lord, are apt to be partial.'

'She is both beautiful and witty,' replied his lordſhip, who found every excellence in fifty thouſand pounds.

'Nay, as for her wit,' ſaid Mr. Cord-wain, 'I am the beſt judge of that, who 'have ſeen her growing up under my 'eye. She took her learning ſurpriz-'ingly, my lord; and, by the time ſhe 'was ten years old, ſhe had read her 'Pſalter quite through. Would it not 'grieve one, then,' continued he, 'to 'part with ſuch a girl as this to one that 'will ſlight her, and keep miſtreſſes?'

'Do me the favour, Mr. Cordwain,' ſaid his lordſhip, 'to acquaint me with 'your reaſons for ſuſpecting that my ſon 'will keep a miſtreſs, though he ſhould 'be ſo happy as to have Miſs Cordwain 'for a wife?'

'Why, you muſt know, my lord,' replied the citizen, looking extremely wiſe, 'that I have made a diſcovery; 'and your ſon is actually carrying on an 'intrigue with my daughter's maid.'

'Sure this muſt be ſome miſtake,' cried the peer.

'No, no, my lord,' anſwered Cord-wain, 'it is no miſtake, I am very ſure 'of it.'

'And you have diſcovered this in-'trigue, you ſay,' reſumed his lordſhip: 'pray, when, and by what means, did 'you diſcover it?'

'About half an hour ago,' replied Mr. Cordwain; 'my daughter told me 'of it.'

'Oh! then it was your daughter that 'diſcovered it,' ſaid his lordſhip, ſmil-ing a little at the old man's abſurdity.

'Ay, ay, my lord,' cried he, con-ſtruing that ſmile into an acknowledg-ment of his daughter's ſagacity; 'I told 'your lordſhip ſhe did not want for wit.'

'But Miſs Cordwain is certainly 'miſtaken now,' ſaid the peer; 'this is 'ſome pretty frowardneſs, a love-quar-'rel; depend upon it we ſhall find it ſo: 'however, I will talk to my ſon, and I'll 'engage the counteſs to diſcourſe your 'daughter upon this matter. Come, 'Mr. Cordwain, we who are the parents 'of theſe young people know their true 'intereſt better than they do, and muſt 'endeavour to make up this little breach 'between them. I will make an end of 'dreſſing,' purſued his lordſhip, bowing low to the cit, 'and join you in the gar-'den a quarter of an hour hence, when 'I hope to clear up this affair to your 'ſatisfaction.'

Mr. Cordwain immediately withdrew; and the peer having ſtepped to his lady's apartment, to acquaint her with this ſtrange ſtory, left it to her to manage Miſs Cordwain, and went in queſt of his ſon, who, when Henrietta left him, had retired to his ſtudy, and was revolving in his mind a ſcheme which, by recon-ciling his intereſt to his love, would gratify all his wiſhes.

CHAP. IX.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COUN-TESS.

THE counteſs, like a diſcreet ma-tron, was reſolved to ſee the young woman of whom Miſs Cordwain enter-tained a jealouſy, that ſhe might, by wholeſome counſels, fortify her againſt ſeduction; for ſhe ſuppoſed that this ſu-ſpicion took it's riſe from the girl's be-ing pretty, and, perhaps, ſome little un-

meaning

meaning gallantry of her ſon's, who, like all other young men, admired beauty wherever he found it.

She was willing alſo to know certainly whether Miſs Cordwain's fears were only imaginary, that ſhe might the better effect a reconciliation between the lovers; for ſhe paſſionately deſired the completion of a match that would put her ſon into poſſeſſion of forty thouſand pounds.

When Mrs. Smith appeared, in conſequence of her ſummons, and told her that Mrs. Henrietta waited her ladyſhip's commands, the counteſs aſked her what ſort of a young woman ſhe was?

Mrs. Smith replied, that ſhe was an aukward ſort of a body, mightily conceited of her beauty, ſhe believed: 'and 'Heaven knows,' added ſhe, 'ſhe has 'not much to boaſt of.'

'Well, tell her to come in,' ſaid the counteſs, beginning to believe, from this account of her, that Miſs Cordwain's fears were not without foundation; for vanity, ſhe well knew, was the great undermíner of chaſtity, from the dutcheſs down to the chambermaid.

When Henrietta entered the room, the counteſs, who expected to ſee a very different perſon, was ſo ſtruck with her beauty and the dignity of her air, that ſhe roſe from her ſeat, and returned the graceful curtſey ſhe made her with a complaiſance that ſurpriſed her own woman, who, being ordered by her lady to leave the room, inſtantly obeyed, but went no farther than the door, where ſhe ſtood liſtening, and heard all that paſſed.

'You appear to me,' ſaid the counteſs to Henrietta, with an engaging ſmile, 'to deſerve ſo little the ſuſpicions that 'are entertained of you, that I really 'know not how to mention them to you, 'though it was for that purpoſe I ſent 'for you hither.'

Henrietta was a little ſurpriſed at this beginning; but, conſcious of the integrity of all her actions, ſhe was wholly free from any apprehenſions that could diſcompoſe her.

'I know not, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'the 'nature of thoſe ſuſpicions which I have 'incurred, but I am very ſure I have no 'guilt to reproach myſelf with, which 'ſhould make me fear to ſtand the ſtrict-'eſt ſcrutiny.'

'Upon my word, I believe you,' ſaid the counteſs, charmed with the noble confidence of her anſwer, and the graceful manner in which it was delivered; 'and it muſt be my ſon's imprudence 'that has given occaſion for Mr. Cord-'wain's ſuſpicions.'

The counteſs was too delicate to make uſe of Miſs Cordwain's name upon this occaſion; but Henrietta in an inſtant comprehended the whole myſtery, and was now able to account for the injurious language ſhe had given her.

'Own freely to me,' purſued the counteſs, ſmiling, 'has not my ſon been 'a little troubleſome to you, and talked 'to you of love, and ſuch idle ſtuff?'

'It is ſome mortification to me, Ma-'dam,' replied Henrietta, bluſhing, 'to 'own that I have been affronted in the 'manner your ladyſhip mentions: how-'ever, it is certainly true, Lord B—— 'has thought me weak enough to be 'dazzled with his profeſſions.'

'Then you have ſeen my ſon often,' ſaid the counteſs.

Henrietta, who thought it behoved her to be very explicit on this occaſion, related to the counteſs the manner of her becoming acquainted with Lord B——, his concealing himſelf in her chamber, and his behaviour afterwards.

'I did not know his lordſhip's name,' purſued ſhe; 'and though I often heard 'him mentioned at Mr. Cordwain's, 'yet, as I had no reaſon to ſuſpect that 'he was the ſame young nobleman, 'whom I had ſuch reaſon to avoid, I 'made no ſcruple to attend Miſs Cord-'wain hither.'

'I am very much concerned,' ſaid the counteſs, 'to hear this account of my 'ſon: it was a very ſhocking attempt. 'So you have acquainted your miſtreſs 'with what happened?'

'No, Madam,' anſwered Henrietta; 'that was not neceſſary: but when I 'diſcovered that Lord B—— was the 'perſon who had treated me ſo freely, I 'deſired Miſs Cordwain to diſmiſs me, 'becauſe I did not chuſe to throw my-'ſelf in his way.'

'That was very prudently reſolved,' ſaid the counteſs: 'and when are you to 'leave Miſs Cordwain?'

'Immediately, Madam,' replied Henrietta: 'I have provided myſelf with a 'poſt-chaiſe to return to London, and I 'believe it is now waiting for me.'

'Certainly,' ſaid the counteſs, after a little pauſe, 'this ſudden reſolution of 'yours muſt ſurpriſe Miſs Cordwain! 'What did ſhe ſay when you acquainted 'her with it?'

'She was extremely angry, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'and ſaid many ſevere 'things to me, at which I was then aſto-'niſhed; but if Miſs Cordwain enter-'tained any unfavourable ſuſpicions of 'me, her behaviour may be accounted 'for.'

'Since you have not acquainted her,' ſaid the counteſs, 'with my ſon's rude 'attempt upon you, what reaſon could 'ſhe have to ſuſpect you?'

'I know of none, Madam,' anſwered Henrietta, 'except his lordſhip's ſpeak-'ing to me in the garden a little time 'ago, may have come to her knowledge.'

'You have ſhewn ſo much candour 'in your anſwers to my queſtions,' re-ſumed the counteſs, 'that I am per-'ſuaded you will tell me frankly the 'ſubject of my ſon's diſcourſe to you in 'the garden.'

'I was born to ſuffer indignities, 'Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, her cheeks glowing with indignation: 'My Lord 'B——, though he muſt know that I 'was not ignorant of his honourable 'paſſion for Miſs Cordwain, yet dared 'to affront me with the mention of his 'love.'

The counteſs was a little ſurprized at this ſally, which eſcaped Henrietta in the warmth of her reſentment, when ſhe called to her remembrance a declaration, which ſhe looked on as the higheſt inſult, ſince Lord B—— was acquainted with her birth. Had the counteſs known that it was the grand-daughter of the Earl of ——, who expreſſed herſelf in ſuch lofty terms, ſhe would have admired that becoming pride which ſuggeſted them; but, in the waiting-maid of Miſs Cordwain, it appeared abſurd and ridiculous, and ſhe was ready to ſuſpect her of artifice and diſſimulation.

But when ſhe caſt her eyes upon Henrietta, and ſaw the emotion with which ſhe was agitated, the deep bluſh that glowed on her cheeks, and the tears that trembled in her eyes, ſhe reproached herſelf with the injuſtice ſhe was guilty of, in ſo ſoon admitting doubts of her innocence.

Henrietta ſuppoſing, from the ſilence of the counteſs, that ſhe had no more to ſay to her, curtſied to her reſpectfully, and was about to withdraw.

'You muſt not go,' ſaid that lady in an obliging accent, 'till I know whe-'ther it is in my power to ſerve you. 'You have thrown up Miſs Cordwain's 'ſervice upon my ſon's account, it is 'but juſt therefore that I ſhould pro-'cure you another; if you are not 'provided for, I will recommend you 'to my ſiſter, who will either take you 'herſelf, or ſettle you with another lady.'

The counteſs, in making this offer, had another view beſides ſerving Henrietta. She was not willing to loſe ſight of her, for ſhe rightly judged that, with ſo many charms in her perſon, and an underſtanding far above what was generally found in perſons of her rank, this young woman was very likely to inſpire a ſolid paſſion; and ſhe dreaded leſt her ſon ſhould be ſo far captivated by her as to neglect the advantageous match that was now offered him.

If ſhe placed her with her ſiſter, or with any of her friends, it would not be eaſy, ſhe thought, for her ſon to get acceſs to her; or, if he reſolved to continue his purſuit, his deſigns, whatever they were, would be known ſoon enough to be prevented.

Henrietta penetrated no farther into the counteſs's ſentiments, than what ſerved to give her a high idea of her benevolence. She accepted her offer with expreſſions of the deepeſt gratitude; and this the lady conſidering as a proof of her ſincerity and right intentions, ſhe, in the billet which ſhe gave her for her ſiſter, recommended her in very obliging terms to her favour.

Henrietta again politely thanked her; and, receiving the billet, upon which there was a full direction, ſhe went out of the counteſs's chamber, with an intention to depart immediately.

Mrs. Smith, whom ſhe found in the anti-chamber, informed her, that her chaiſe was waiting for her at the gate; upon which Henrietta took leave of her, and deſcended the back-ſtairs, but was ſuddenly ſtopped by Mr. Cordwain, who had followed her, and, ſeizing her rudely by the arm, charged her with having robbed his daughter.

CHAP. X.

CONTAINS A DISCOVERY WHICH IT IS HOPED THE READER WILL NOT BE DISPLEASED WITH.

'GOOD Heaven!' exclaimed Henrietta, in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, 'what can this mean?'

'Look

'Look you, child,' said the citizen, 'my daughter tells me you have stole 'her diamond bracelet: any body but 'myself would send you to prison di- 'rectly; but I am tender-hearted, and 'consider, that though I could hang you 'for this robbery, yet that would be 'poor satisfaction for such a loss: there- 'fore, in compassion, I will spare your 'life, provided you immediately restore 'the bracelet.'

Henrietta had by this time collected her scattered spirits, and comprehended the motive of this malicious accusation.

'May I not see Miss Cordwain, Sir?' said she, in a composed accent; 'I am 'pretty sure that I can convince her she 'wrongs me greatly by this strange su- 'spicion.'

'See her! what should you see her 'for?' replied the old man, 'unless you 'will give me back the bracelet: you 'must not think to move her with your 'whining; her intreaties shall not save 'you if you are obstinate; so look to it. 'But come, perhaps you will have the 'grace to repent, and return the brace- 'let; come along.'

Saying this, he pulled her up stairs, and led her, with no great complaisance, into his daughter's chamber, who sat exulting in her successful mischief, and the disgrace she had fixed upon the crea- ture that presumed to rival her: a blush, however, dyed her cheeks at the sight of Henrietta, who, with a look that at once expressed the highest contempt of her mean accuser, and calm confidence in her own untainted innocence, asked her how she had so far offended her as to make her seek her life?

'Offended me, creature!' said Miss Cordwain, 'have you the assurance to 'imagine that I am uneasy because—be- 'cause—You vain, saucy flirt—who told 'you that I could be jealous of you? 'and so you suppose—but you shall pro- 'duce my bracelet.'

'Aye, that she shall,' cried the citi- zen; 'I wish we were in town, I would 'carry her before Alderman Grey- 'goose immediately.—Come, girl, don't 'be a fool, but deliver up the bracelet, 'for this is a hanging matter, let me 'tell you.'

'Do you really intend, Madam,' said Henrietta, looking on Miss Cordwain with a most contemptuous smile, 'to go 'through with this malicious accusation? 'and are you resolved to perjure your- 'self, and swear that I have got your 'bracelet?'

'What does the creature mean!' in- terrupted Miss Cordwain, colouring.

'My meaning is,' said Henrietta, 'that your bracelet is certainly in your 'own possession; and that you pretend 'to have lost it only to fix a scandal upon 'me.'

'O my God!' cried Miss Cordwain, putting her hand to her head: 'the ex- 'cessive insolence of this wench affects 'me so, I believe I shall faint.—Dear 'papa, let her go about her business, I 'had rather lose ten bracelets than suffer 'so much uneasiness. Dear Sir, let her 'go, one time or other she will meet 'with her deserts. She will not stop at 'this theft, but somebody else may 'bring her to justice; I will have no- 'thing more to do with her.'

'Base woman!' cried Henrietta, al- most choaked with rage. 'No, I will 'not take the liberty you offer me: have 'our laws, think you, no punishment 'for a calumny like this, that strikes at 'life as well as reputation? You shall 'be forced to prove your charge, and 'my fame shall be cleared to your ever- 'lasting confusion.'

Miss Cordwain, conscious of her guilt, and apprehensive of the consequences of what she had done, knew not what answer to make to this menace. As for the citizen, he stared with stupid wonder upon the injured fair one: for the extra- ordinary emotion she was in, gave such vehemence to her utterance, and such fire to her eyes, that he even trembled, as if in the presence of some superior being. But poor Henrietta, after this sudden sally of rage, found her heart so oppressed with the indignity she had suf- fered, that she burst into a violent passion of tears.

Miss Cordwain was ready to renew her insults, when she found her so mor- tified; and her father being recovered from his panick, again urged her to re- store the bracelet; when a servant came in, and informed them, that dinner was going to be served, and that his lord and lady expected them in the dining-room.

Miss Cordwain immediately obeyed the summons, for she dreaded the con- clusion of this affair. When she entered the room, the countess, who knew no- thing of what had happened, seeing her

look very pale, asked her if she was well? and Lord B——, who had promised his father to cure her jealousy by redoubled assiduity for the future, approached, and, with a well counterfeited tenderness, expressed his concern for her indisposition.

Miss Cordwain, who had been assured by her father that the earl earnestly desired the match between his son and her should go forward, resolved not to protract it by any shew of resentment at what was past, and therefore received his little assiduities with all the complaisance she was mistress of; but, desirous of mortifying him in the person of her who had so greatly attracted his notice, as well as to give him an opinion of the softness of her disposition, she told him, that indeed she was prodigiously discomposed; that her maid had robbed her; 'and my father,' added she, 'threatens 'the poor wretch with a prosecution, 'and I was weak enough to be ex- 'cessively shocked with her blubber- 'ing.'

'Has your maid robbed you, Miss?' said the countess, extremely surprized.

'She has stolen a diamond bracelet 'from me this very morning, Madam,' replied Miss Cordwain.

'Impossible!' cried Lord B——, in a transport that deprived him of all consideration; 'Miss Courteney could not 'be guilty of any thing mean or scan- 'dalous.'

These words were scarce uttered, when he discovered and repented of his indiscretion; but it was now too late to repair it.

'Miss Courteney!' repeated Miss Cordwain, recovering from her surprize; 'who is Miss Courteney, my lord?'

The countess, perceiving her son was embarrassed, endeavoured to relieve him, by asking Miss Cordwain some questions concerning her loss; but that young lady would not be diverted from her question.

'This creature has a variety of names, 'I suppose,' said she: 'she hired her- 'self to me by the name of Benson, and 'Courteney it seems is that she has been 'formerly known by. Sure I have been 'very unfortunate to get such a wretch 'to attend me!'

'Madam,' said Lord B——, again thrown off his guard by his indignation at hearing a woman of Henrietta's merit so grossly abused, 'you don't know who 'you are speaking of.'

'Why, do you know?' said the earl to his son, in an accent that shewed how extremely he was displeased with his imprudence.

'Yes, my lord,' replied he, 'I do; 'and, Madam,' pursued he, addressing himself to Miss Cordwain, 'I am sure 'you will have candour enough to ex- 'cuse my engaging with some warmth 'in the defence of the unfortunate young 'lady, who is now your servant, when 'you shall know that she is the niece of 'the Earl of ——, and that it is her 'firm attachment to the religion she was 'brought up in, which hinders her from 'succeeding to a very large estate, and 'makes it necessary for her to go to ser- 'vice for a subsistence.'

This account brought tears into the eyes of the countess, who inly applauded herself for her discernment in the favourable sentiments she had conceived for Henrietta before she knew who she was.

The earl appeared moved, and was beginning to ask his son some questions concerning this fair unfortunate, when Miss Cordwain fetched a deep sigh, and fell back in her chair.

Rage at this discovery of her rival's birth and extraordinary merit, and terror, lest the scandalous accusation she had forged against her should end in her own disgrace, operated so powerfully upon her spirits, that she fainted away.

While the countess supported her, Lord B—— rang the bell very deliberately for assistance; and the earl, not much concerned at an accident which he imputed to a jealousy that proved her passion for his son, took that opportunity to remind him that it was his interest to improve the affection this young woman had for him.

The countess, who had in vain searched her pockets for a smelling-bottle, ordered a servant, who appeared at the summons of the bell, to bring one off her toilet; when Mr. Cordwain entered the room, and, seeing his daughter in that condition, made but one step from the door to the place where she sat, exclaiming, 'Oh! my child, what ails 'my child? is she dead?'

'Don't be alarmed,' said the countess, 'it is only a fainting fit, she will 'recover presently.'

Lord

Lord B——, who was aſhamed to appear wholly inactive upon this occaſion before his deſigned father-in-law, had preſence of mind enough to take a decanter of water from the ſide-board, and ſprinkle ſome of it on Miſs Cordwain's face.

This remedy was applied ſo ſucceſsfully, that ſhe immediately opened her eyes, but the firſt object they met had like to have cloſed them again; for her father, hearing a ſmelling-bottle called for, remembered that ſhe always carried one or two about her, and, ſearching her pockets with trembling haſte, pulled out, with a ſmelling-bottle, the bracelet which ſhe had concealed there, as in a place where it was likely to be moſt ſecure, being ſubject to no ſearch but her own.

The old man made none of thoſe reflections upon this accident which were obvious enough to every one elſe; but, perceiving his daughter was beginning to recover, preſented the bracelet, inſtead of the ſmelling-bottle, to her, conceiving the former to be the beſt reſtorative.

'See, child!' cried he, in a tranſport, 'I have found your bracelet. Come, 'you muſt be well now—I don't wonder 'you was grieved: truly it would have 'been a great loſs.'

Miſs Cordwain flattered herſelf, from the words *I have found your bracelet*, that her father had wit enough to ſave her from any reproach, by giving ſome favourable turn to the diſcovery; but in this ſhe greatly over-rated his abilities.

'And where doſt think I found it, 'child?' purſued the old man; 'even 'in thy own pocket, as all the company 'can witneſs.'

'Very true,' ſaid Lord B——, maliciouſly.

'Was it found in my pocket?' ſaid Miſs Cordwain. 'Why, then, to be 'ſure, I pulled it off with my glove this 'morning, and forgot it: I proteſt I am 'ſorry there has been ſo much noiſe 'made about it.'

'It is a pity indeed,' ſaid the counteſs, 'conſidering who the perſon is 'that was ſuppoſed to have ſtolen it.'

'O la! papa,' cried Miſs Cordwain, 'you don't know that my maid Hen-'rietta is diſcovered to be a great lady.

'Upon my word it is true,' purſued ſhe, ſeeing him look ſurprized.

'I am ſorry to hear that,' ſaid the citizen, rubbing his forehead; 'for if 'ſhe has friends, who will ſupport 'her, ſhe may commence a ſuit againſt 'me for Scandalum Magnatum, and 'what a power of money may I loſe! 'See what comes of your heedleſſneſs, 'girl. I proteſt I don't know what to 'do.'

The counteſs, though ſhe was vexed at the vulgar ſarcaſm of the daughter, was nevertheleſs deſirous of freeing the old man from his uneaſineſs, as well as to have an excuſe for viſiting the injured young lady.

'I am perſuaded,' ſaid ſhe, 'that 'Miſs Courteney's delicacy will prevent 'her from ſeeking any publick reparation for the affront ſhe has ſuffered; 'but I will ſee her myſelf, and, if ne-'ceſſary, diſſuade her from taking any 'reſolution to your prejudice.'

Lord B——, who was talking to his father at a diſtant window, hearing this propoſal, approached, and, by a look which he gave the counteſs his mother, ſeemed to beſpeak her utmoſt tenderneſs and complaiſance to the afflicted fair one.

Mr. Cordwain thanked her heartily for her kindneſs. 'But, odſo! my lady,' cried he, ſtopping her as ſhe was going out, 'I beg your ladyſhip's pardon, you 'muſt take the key up with you,' continued he, fumbling in his pockets, and at laſt pulling it out; 'for, when I came 'down, I locked the door for fear the 'bird ſhould fly away.' With theſe words, he gave the counteſs the key, ſmiling and nodding his head in applauſe of his own ſagacity.

The counteſs was extremely ſhocked to hear of this new indignity which the poor young lady had ſuffered, but ſhe diſſembled her concern, and ſilently withdrew.

Lord B—— again ſtole to a window to hide his emotions; and the earl, though greatly diſguſted with the behaviour of both father and daughter, yet approached them with a complaiſant air, and congratulated the latter on the recovery of her jewel.

Thus did theſe noble perſons accommodate themſelves to the manners of thoſe whom they in ſecret deſpiſed; and, for the ſake of a few paltry thouſands, ſhewed the utmoſt ſolicitude to aſſociate plebeian meanneſs in the honours of a noble anceſtry, and to give title, rank, precedence,

precedence, to one who would disgrace them all.

CHAP. XI.

HENRIETTA RETURNS TO LONDON.

THE countess, who was greatly affected with the cruel usage Henrietta had received, could with difficulty restrain her tears when she entered the room where the fair prisoner was confined: that air of distinction which she had observed in her before she knew her birth, seemed now more remarkable, and made the humiliating condition to which she was reduced a subject of painful reflection to Lady ——, who approached her with a look of tenderness and pity, and, taking her hand,

'I scarce know how to speak to you,' said she, 'about an affair that Miss 'Cordwain has much more reason to be 'ashamed of than you. She has found 'her bracelet.'

Henrietta was a little surprised at the kind and familiar manner in which the countess accosted her; but still preserving that distant respect, which was due from the character she had assumed to a lady of her rank, she curtsied profoundly low, and thanked her for the honour she did her in condescending to bring this grateful piece of news herself.

'I must tell you also,' said the countess, 'that I am not ignorant of your 'name and family, nor of your motives 'for submitting to go to service; for 'which you deserve to be esteemed and 'admired by all the world. It was my 'son that betrayed your secret,' pursued the lady, observing that Henrietta looked surprised: 'I will not ask you now 'how you came to intrust him with it; 'some other time you shall, if you please, 'tell me all your story. I have now 'only leisure to assure you, that I am 'your sincere friend, and that I will serve 'you with all the interest I have in any 'way you shall desire.'

Henrietta, after making a proper acknowledgment for this kind declaration, told the countess, that being determined to continue the way of life she had entered into, till her relations of themselves thought proper to alter it, the recommendation her ladyship had given her to her sister was the greatest service she could possibly desire, and would be ever most gratefully remembered.

'I admire your resolution, Miss 'Courteney,' said the countess; 'but 'I am grieved to think you should be 'in a situation so unworthy of you; 'something must be done to extricate 'you from it.'

'I beg, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'that your ladyship's kind concern for 'me may not lead you to take any steps 'in my favour with my relations. No,' pursued she, with some warmth, 'their 'unnatural behaviour to me deserves the 'neglect I shew them, in not soliciting 'their assistance. I have already got 'over all those little passions and prejudices which might hinder me from being easy with my humble lot; and I 'freely confess to you, Madam, that I 'find a secret pleasure in the thoughts of 'mortifying the pride of my Lord ——, 'when some accident (for some accident 'it must be) shall shew him his niece in 'the quality of a servant.'

'Consent at least,' said the countess, 'to my acquainting my sister with your 'birth, that she may endeavour to place 'you in such a manner as will be most 'agreeable to you.'

'I do not wish, Madam, to be known 'to the person I serve,' replied Henrietta; 'and I desire to have no other consideration shewn me than what my behaviour in the station I am placed in shall 'merit.'

'Well,' said the countess, 'it shall 'be as you would have it; but I cannot 'express to you how much I esteem and 'admire you. You may judge of my 'good opinion of you, Miss, when I 'tell you, that as to what regards my 'son's passion for you, I depend entirely 'upon your candour and generosity. 'You know our views for him; and this 'is all I shall say.'

'I am obliged to you, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'for the confidence you repose in me; I will endeavour to deserve 'it. And now, Madam,' pursued she, smiling, 'since my imprisonment is at 'an end, I will, with your ladyship's 'permission, set out immediately for 'London; the chaise I had hired is, I 'suppose, still waiting for me. I hope 'to have the honour of presenting your 'letter to Lady D—— to-morrow, or 'next day at farthest.'

'Take my kindest wishes along with 'you,'

'you,' said the countess, kissing her; and taking a diamond ring from her finger, 'wear this for my sake,' said she, giving it to Henrietta; 'the intrinsick value of it is but small, but I hope you will wear it in remembrance of me.'

The countess went out of the room as soon as she had spoken these words, leaving Henrietta extremely affected with her kindness; and all obstacles to her journey being now removed, she hastened to the gate, placed herself in her post-chaise, which she found waiting, and in a few moments was out of sight.

Mean time, the countess returned to her company, and told Mr. Cordwain, smiling, that he had nothing to fear from Henrietta's vindictive resolutions. Upon which Miss Cordwain said, she would go up to her, and make her an apology for what had happened; but dinner was that moment served, which made it not necessary for the countess to tell her that Henrietta was gone, in order to prevent her intended civility: but, as soon as a proper opportunity offered, she took care to let the young lady know, that her suspicions of Henrietta were very ill-grounded; that she was perfectly virtuous; and likely to remain in the obscure condition of a servant, unless her relations, who were persons of rank and fortune, thought proper to do something for her.

She added, in order to remove all her uneasiness, that she had recommended her to a lady who would procure her a place, which was the least she could do for a young woman of her birth, in such unhappy circumstances.

Miss Cordwain was very well satisfied with what the countess had done; being persuaded that, since she was so desirous the treaty between Lord B—— and her should go forward, that she would take care to hinder any thing from happening on the part of Henrietta, that might give her cause for disgust.

But poor Lord B—— was in a truly pitiable situation: he was in love with the person of Henrietta, and the fortune of Miss Cordwain; and these different passions by turns equally possessed him, so that it was impossible for him to form any fixed resolution.

When he reflected on the solid advantages that would accrue to him from a marriage with the packer's daughter, such as being enabled to play as high at Arthur's as my Lord ——, to bring as many race-horses to Newmarket as ——, to have as splendid equipages as the Earl of ——, and several others, which make the envy and emulation of many of our present race of nobles, he was ready to sacrifice his inclinations to motives so just, so reasonable, so meritorious.

But when the image of Henrietta rose to his thoughts; her person so lovely, her manners so elegant, her birth not beneath his own, her virtue so eminent; how could he think of putting such a treasure out of his reach, by marrying her despicable rival! And indeed, so just were his notions of this treasure, and so high his value of it, that, provided any method could be found to reconcile her to her aunt, and secure to her the succession of her estate, he would willingly have renounced his pretensions to Miss Cordwain, and have married Henrietta; though her fortune, as heiress of Lady Meadows's estate, would be some thousands less than Miss Cordwain's.

Such a proof of disinterestedness, he thought, must needs be very grateful to a young woman of Henrietta's fine understanding and enlarged sentiments; and, having brought himself to this point, his next care was to procure a private interview with her, that he might acquaint her with his designs, and engage her concurrence with them.

But this scheme being defeated by her sudden departure, which he learned from his mother, he was plunged into new perplexity and uneasiness. He asked the countess, with an air of indifference and unconcern, where she was gone, and how she intended to dispose of herself? But that discerning lady, who observed his sudden emotion at the news of Henrietta's departure, would give him no other satisfaction than telling him, that she supposed she would again go to service; for she seemed to have no expectations of any favour from her relations.

Lord B——, after a little reflection, comforted himself with a hope, that some accident or other would again throw her in his way; and that the disgust she must necessarily entertain to a way of life so unworthy of her, would induce her to embrace his honourable proposals; for such he conceived them to be, since all the sacrifice he should expect from her,

was

was a temporary compliance with her aunt's inclinations with regard to religion: but, however, he thought it would be prudent not to break off with Miss Cordwain, because in her fortune he would always find wherewithal to comfort himself, if he was disappointed in his love.

In pursuance of this wise resolution, he behaved in such a manner to the citizen's daughter, as gave her no cause to be displeased with him; so that every thing in this noble family, and their designed allies, was upon the same footing as before Henrietta, with mischief-making beauty, came in the way.

HENRIETTA.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAP. I.

Atheiſts have been but rare, ſince Nature's birth;
Till now ſhe-atheiſts ne'er appear'd on earth.
Ye men of deep reſearches, ſay, whence ſprings
This daring character in timorous things!
Who ſtart at feathers, from an inſect fly,
A match for nothing—but the Deity.
YOUNG's UNIVERSAL PASSION.

MEAN time our fair heroine, having performed her little journey without any unfortunate accident, arrived late in the evening at the houſe of her friend Mrs. Willis, who, in her aſtoniſhment at her ſudden return, aſked her a hundred queſtions in a breath.

Henrietta ſatisfied her eager curioſity with a ſuccinct detail of all that had happened to her that day, which had indeed been a very buſy one.

The honeſt heart of Mrs. Willis was variouſly affected with the different parts of her ſtory. She wept for her ſufferings; ſhe execrated the malicious Miſs Cordwain; ſhe praiſed the counteſs; and was exceedingly ſolicitous about the purport of Lord B——'s deſigns, which, from what ſhe had heard of his behaviour, appeared to her very myſterious. But Henrietta, who had a thorough contempt for that young lord, declared, that although he ſhould break with Miſs Cordwain, and addreſs her upon honourable terms, yet ſhe could not bring her heart to approve of him.

'He is mean,' ſaid ſhe, 'and ſordid 'in his temper. His principles are bad: 'he is a lord, but he is not a gentle-'man; and I am ſure I could never 'eſteem him. Beſides, the counteſs, 'who is more alarmed about the ſenti-'ments he has for me than I think ſhe 'has reaſon, depends upon my honour 'not to encourage any overtures from 'him, and I will not abuſe her con-'fidence.

'It is eaſy,' purſued ſhe, ſmiling, 'to be juſt when our own inclinations do 'not oppoſe it. I ſhall pretend to no 'merit in making this ſacrifice, if ever 'it be in my power to make it; becauſe 'in reality it will not be a great one. If 'riches and ſplendour could have made 'me happy, I would have married Sir 'Iſaac Darby; for it was not his age 'that I objected to moſt, but to thoſe 'qualities and manners which made his 'age contemptible.'

'But, ſurely, my dear,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'your gratitude would be en-'gaged, ſhould Lord B——, in the pre-'ſent inequality of your circumſtances, 'make you an offer of his hand.'

'Not at all,' replied Henrietta, with ſome warmth: 'no man has a right 'to the love or eſteem of a woman on 'whom he has entertained diſhonourable 'deſigns, and, failing in them, offers 'marriage at laſt. The lover, who mar-'ries his miſtreſs only becauſe he can-'not gain her upon eaſier terms, has 'juſt as much generoſity as the high-'wayman who leaves a traveller in poſ-'ſeſſion of his money, becauſe he is not 'able to take it from him.'

'Well, well, my dear Miſs,' ſaid Mrs Willis, ſmiling, 'I can collect this 'at leaſt from the nice diſtinctions you 'make, that your heart is abſolutely 'free; you would not reaſon ſo well,

'were there any ſecret paſſion in the 'caſe.'

'Surely,' replied Henrietta, 'you do 'not imagine that I ſhould become leſs 'delicate in my notions for being in love: 'that paſſion, like ſome plants, derives 'it's qualities from the ſoil it grows in; 'for inſtance, in Lord B——, it is 'mean, ſelfiſh, wavering.'

'And what would it be in you?' interrupted Mrs. Willis.

'Ah! no matter,' cried Henrietta; 'I am not in love yet, and never will 'be with a man who has ſuch ſentiments 'as Lord B——; he had beſt be con-'ſtant to Miſs Cordwain. Plebeian 'lords, and the nobility of the ſhop and 'warehouſe, are equal matches.'

To this remark Mrs. Willis, who was pleaſed with the vivacity of her fair friend, aſſented only with a ſmile: for ſupper was now placed upon the table; and, as ſhe knew Henrietta had not dined, ſhe was extremely ſolicitous to make her eat; and with the ſame maternal fondneſs hurried her ſoon to bed, that ſhe might recover the fatigue ſhe had ſuffered during the day.

The next morning, at eleven o'clock, our fair heroine ſet out in an hackney-coach for ——— Square, where Lady D—— lived, to whom ſhe was to deliver the recommendatory letter which the counteſs had given her.

The lady was at her toilet when ſhe read her ſiſter's letter, which Henrietta had ſent in to her, and immediately ordered her admittance. Surprized at the elegant figure which met her eyes in the glaſs upon our fair heroine's entering the room, ſhe haſtily turned her head, and gazed on Henrietta ſo intently, that ſhe bluſhed; which Lady D—— obſerving, obligingly deſired her to ſit down, and ſaid, ſhe would talk to her preſently.

Henrietta modeſtly placed herſelf at a diſtance, but ſo luckily for the lady's curioſity, that ſhe could have a full view of her in her glaſs, without renewing her confuſion.

'My ſiſter,' ſaid Lady D——, breaking ſilence at laſt, 'has mentioned you 'very advantageouſly, Mrs. Benſon; I 'wiſh it may be in my power to ſerve 'you.'

Henrietta bowed reſpectfully.

'You are very young,' purſued the lady; 'I ſuppoſe Miſs Cordwain's was 'the firſt ſervice you ever lived in?'

At the word ſervice, Henrietta bluſhed again; and indeed, the lady did not pronounce it without ſome heſitation, for having a ſenſible and ingenuous mind, ſhe felt the impropriety of the term when uſed towards a perſon who, notwithſtanding the humility of her deportment, had a dignity in her looks and air which commanded reſpect. She took notice of this emotion, and the more becauſe ſhe ſaw it endeavoured to be ſuppreſſed; and being deſirous of gaining ſome farther knowledge of her, ſhe aſked her a hundred little queſtions, which ſhe thought would lead her to an explanation of her circumſtances.

Henrietta avoided making a diſcovery of herſelf, but anſwered in ſuch a manner, as, without ſatisfying the lady's curioſity, gave her a very good opinion of her candour and her ſenſe: but ſhe was particularly ſtruck with the graceful eaſe with which ſhe talked; and obſerved ſuch a perfect politeneſs in her manners, as perſuaded her ſhe was born in a much higher rank than her preſent ſituation allowed the probability of.

Lady D——'s daughter now entered the room, and aſked her mamma, if ſhe deſired to hear her take a leſſon from her ſinging-maſter that morning?

The lady ordered the maſter to be admitted, upon which Henrietta roſe up to go away; but the lady told her, with a benevolent ſmile, that ſhe ſhould ſtay and hear Miſs D—— perform, and deſired her to reſume her ſeat.

While the young lady was ſinging, Lady D—— kept her eyes fixed on Henrietta's face; and, from the ſweet expreſſion in it, ſuppoſing that ſhe had a taſte for muſick, aſked her, if ſhe had ever been taught?

Henrietta, though not willing to make a diſplay of talents which were not neceſſary to her preſent condition, yet owned, that ſhe had a little knowledge of muſick.

Lady D—— immediately deſired to hear her ſing; and the young lady at the ſame time preſenting her guitar to her, ſhe was obliged to comply. Her air, her attitude, the exquiſite grace with which ſhe touched the little inſtrument, the ſweetneſs of her voice, and the ſenſibility in her fine eyes, charmed Lady D——, who was an enthuſiaſtic admirer of the art; ſo that ſhe cried out in a kind of tranſport, 'Mr. Minime, would you 'not be proud of ſuch a ſcholar?'

'Madam,' ſaid the maſter, bowing, 'the

'the young gentlewoman has a very 'pretty voice and manner, to be ſure: 'but if Miſs D—— applies cloſely to 'muſick for ſeven or eight years longer, 'and does not ſuffer her mind to be 'diſtracted with the ſtudy of other ſcien-'ces, I ſhall have more reaſon to be 'proud of my ſcholar than any maſter 'in the world.'

This ſpeech forced a ſmile from Henrietta, who the third time roſe up to be gone, upon hearing a female viſiter announced; but Lady D——, conceiving that ſhe was not obliged to a ſtrict obſervation of ceremony with the perſon now entering, (who was of a very low birth, but had a competent fortune left her by a father, who had held it as a maxim of ſound wiſdom, that money ſhould be got by any means) again inſiſted upon Henrietta's ſtaying, telling her, ſhe had thought of ſomething for her, and that ſhe would acquaint her with it as ſoon as the lady was gone.

Henrietta had but juſt time to expreſs a grateful acknowledgment of her kindneſs, when the viſiter was introduced. She was a woman of a very mean aſpect, but had a great deal of ſelf-ſufficiency in her air. After the uſual compliments were over, ſhe threw herſelf into an eaſy chair, and examined Henrietta with ſuch extreme attention, that ſhe bluſhed.

The lady, who took conſequence to herſelf from the power of throwing an ingenuous mind into confuſion, finding that Henrietta was oppreſſed by her looks, gazed at her the more earneſtly: and having indulged herſelf ſeveral minutes in this exertion of her ſuperiority, thought it was now time to make the poor baſhful girl ſtare in her turn, and began to diſplay her wit and learning; the former in an inundation of words that ſwallowed up her meaning; and the latter in French words and phraſes, brought in to ſupply the deficiencies of her own native tongue.

Lady D——, who was uſed to divert herſelf with the ridiculous ſingularity of this woman's character, liſtened to her with complaiſance. But Henrietta, who began to conceive a very mean opinion of a lady who ſeemed to value herſelf ſo highly upon the knowledge of a language which was now become a part of every cobler's daughter's education, beheld her with an indifference that ſenſibly wounded her pride, and made her have recourſe to other methods to impreſs her prodigious conſequence upon her; and ſince ſhe could not make her ſtare at her learning, ſhe was reſolved to make her wonder at her principles.

'You know, Lady D——,' ſaid ſhe abruptly, 'I do not often go to church.'

'I know it, and I am ſorry for it,' replied her ladyſhip.

'Upon my word,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have 'too much reverence for the Deity to 'go to a place where it is ten to one but 'I ſhall hear him blaſphemed.'

Henrietta now began to ſtare indeed. The wonderful lady proceeded—

'I never pretend to deny that I am 'a deiſt.'

'You muſt pardon me, Mrs. ——,' interrupted Lady D——, 'if I tell you 'that I really think you often declare 'that very improperly; I have heard 'you ſay ſo before your children and 'ſervants.'

'Madam,' replied Mrs. ——, 'I 'take care that my ſervants ſhall not 'think me an atheiſt. They know my 'principles better: they know I am a 'deiſt; they have heard me declare that 'I believe there is an intelligent cauſe 'which governs the world by phyſical 'rules. As for moral attributes, there 'is no ſuch thing; it is impious and abſurd to ſuppoſe it. The arbitrary conſtitution of things in the human ſyſtem 'produces happineſs and miſery; that is 'to ſay, miſery and happineſs is productive of—or rather, as I ſaid before, 'the arbitrary conſtitution of things, 'vice and virtue, is neceſſarily produced 'by—that is, neceſſarily brings on happineſs or miſery. Prayer, and ſuch 'like artifices of religion, is fooliſh: for 'whatever is, is right. To talk of imitating God, is blaſphemy. His Providence is extended to collective bodies 'only; he has no regard to individuals; 'nor is the ſoul a diſtinct ſubſtance from 'the body. There is no future ſtate; 'it is all a fiction. To argue from unequal diſtributions is abſurd and blaſphemous. Whatever is, is beſt. The 'law of nature is ſufficiently clear; and 'there is no need of any ſupernatural 'revelation.'

'I muſt entreat you, Madam,' interrupted Lady D——, ſeeing her eldeſt daughter that moment enter the room, 'to change the diſcourſe now; Miſs 'D—— has not been uſed to ſuch deep

'reaſoning on theſe awful ſubjects, and 'may perhaps miſtake what you are ſay-'ing for blaſphemy.'

'More abſurd miſtakes than that may 'be made, Madam,' replied Mrs. ——, 'when perſons are not allowed to exer-'ciſe their mental faculties.—But your 'ladyſhip is going to dreſs—I interrupt 'you.' Saying this, ſhe roſe up, and Lady D—— making no efforts to detain her, took her leave.

'I have always hated that woman,' ſaid Miſs D——, as ſoon as ſhe was gone, 'ever ſince I heard her ridicule 'parental affection, and call it brutal 'inſtinct.'

'Oh!' ſaid Lady D——, laughing, 'it would ill become one of her elevated 'underſtanding to have natural af-'fections: thoſe ſhe treats as vulgar 'prejudices. Her own ſex are the ob-'jects of her ſcorn, becauſe they are 'ſubject to ſuch weakneſſes as tender-'neſs and pity. She reads Seneca on 'friendſhip in the morning; and ex-'claims, "O the exalted paſſion! how "divinely he treats it! what noble ſen-"timents!" In the afternoon, ſhe over-'reaches her friend, and applauds her 'own wiſdom. Epictetus is ſtudied with 'great care. She will preach a moral 'ſermon out of Epictetus that will laſt 'two hours. Epictetus teaches her to 'curb her paſſions. She reads him in-'tently while her maid is combing her 'hair, and cloſes her book to ſtorm at 'the poor trembling creature for ac-'cidentally hurting her with the comb.'

CHAP. II.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA MAKES A VERY FANTASTICK DISTINCTION.

HENRIETTA could not help ſmiling at Lady D——'s ſatirical manner of expoſing the follies of the lady who had juſt left the room: but a female free-thinker was, in her opinion, ſo ſhocking a character, that ſhe would much rather have ſeen it the object of abhorrence than mirth.

Lady D—— put an end to her reflections: for, turning towards her, 'Mrs. 'Benſon,' ſaid ſhe, 'it is time to think 'of you now.' Henrietta immediately roſe from her ſeat.

'There is a lady of my acquaintance,' purſued Lady D——, 'to whom your 'accompliſhments of ſinging and play-'ing will make you a very acceptable 'companion: and indeed, I think it is 'a pity a young woman of your appear-'ance and genteel education ſhould re-'main in the condition of a ſervant, 'which I am perſuaded you was not 'born to.'

Henrietta bluſhed; which Lay D—— obſerving, 'Come,' ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, 'be ingenuous, and confeſs that the pro-'poſal I have made you will ſuit you 'better than being a ſervant.'

'Indeed, Madam, it does not,' replied Henrietta; 'I am extremely obliged to 'your ladyſhip for your kind intentions, 'but I had rather be recommended to 'the lady as a ſervant than in any other 'character.'

'You ſurprize me,' ſaid Lady D——, after a little pauſe; 'what objections can 'you have to a ſituation ſo much to be 'preferred to ſervitude?'

'I am very ſure, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'that I have not too much pride 'to be a ſervant, ſince it is neceſſary I 'ſhould be one: but I am afraid I 'cannot ſo eaſily ſubmit to be a depen-'dent.'

Lady D——, a little diſappointed to find herſelf ſo far below this obſcure young perſon in delicacy of ſentiment, anſwered gravely,

'Well, ſince it muſt be ſo, I will 'ſerve you in your own way; let me ſee 'you again a few days hence, by that 'time I may poſſibly have heard of ſome-'thing for you.'

Henrietta again politely thanked her ladyſhip, and withdrew, leaving Lady D—— and her daughter differently affected with her behaviour in this laſt inſtance: for young minds are apt to be ſtruck with uncommon ſentiments, and to admire ſuch as ſeem to poſſeſs them; while perſons advanced in years, either from experience of the world, or the natural depravity of the human heart, aſcribe every thing to affectation and deſign that contradicts certain received maxims in life.

However, Henrietta's peculiarity made Lady D—— extremely deſirous to know who ſhe was, and whether there was any thing extraordinary in her circumſtances. She wrote to the counteſs her ſiſter, expreſſing her curioſity: but that lady was reſolved to keep Henrietta's ſecret, as well in regard to the promiſe ſhe had given her, as becauſe ſhe really thought

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an unſeaſonable diſcovery of her true name and family would be diſadvantageous to the plan ſhe had laid.

She therefore contented herſelf with telling her ſiſter, in anſwer, that Mrs. Benſon was a very deſerving young woman, who had been well brought up, but, by misfortunes in her family, reduced to go to ſervice.

Lady D—— was ſatisfied with this account; and when Henrietta, in obedience to her commands, waited on her again, ſhe received her with great benevolence; told her, ſhe had recommended her to a lady of great fortune, whoſe place ſhe believed would be an advantageous one; and ordered her own woman to go with a meſſage to the lady, and introduce her.

Henrietta having a hackney-coach waiting, Lady D——'s woman and her, after ſome ceremonies which our fair heroine would gladly have diſpenſed with, ſeated themſelves in it; and, as ſoon as it drove from the door, the Abigail began—

'Well, Madam, you are certainly 'very fortunate; Mrs. Autumn's place 'is one of the beſt in Chriſtendom: you 'have nothing to do but to flatter her, 'and you will gain her heart for ever.'

'Is the lady fond of flattery, then?' ſaid Henrietta.

'Oh! immenſely,' cried the other; 'but, for fear you ſhould miſtake, and 'compliment her in the wrong place, 'you muſt know (and I think it is very 'lucky that I had an opportunity of in'ſtructing you) you muſt know that, 'though ſhe is between forty and fifty 'years of age, ſhe affects to be thought 'extremely young; and having been 'handſome in her youth, as my lady 'ſays, ſhe forgets ſhe is no longer ſo, now 'ſhe is old.

'Now, dear Madam, this is your cue. 'Be ſure to praiſe her bloomy com'plexion, and the brightneſs of her eyes; 'and, if ſhe bids you gueſs how old ſhe 'is, as 'tis ten to one but ſhe will ſome 'time hence, don't exceed twenty years, 'I charge you.

'The poor ſimple girl that lived with 'her laſt, loſt her place, by ſaying, 'when ſhe aſked her how old ſhe be'lieved her to be, that ſhe took her lady'ſhip to be about the ſame age as her 'mother. She was a vulgar creature, 'to be ſure. You, Madam, are in no 'danger of ſpeaking ſo improperly. But 'on certain occaſions you may contra'dict her rudely, and ſhe will be the 'more pleaſed; as, for inſtance, when 'ſhe ſays ſhe looks horridly! tell her, in 'a ſurly way, as if you were vexed at 'her perverſeneſs, that you never ſaw 'her look ſo handſome.'

'Mighty well,' ſaid Henrietta, ſmiling, 'I perceive you are excellent in this 'art; I am——'

'Oh! no thanks, dear Madam,' interrupted Lady D——'s woman, 'I am 'fond of doing good offices.'

'I was going to ſay,' replied Henrietta, 'that I am afraid theſe wiſe do'cuments will be thrown away upon 'me.'

'I hope not,' ſaid the other, gravely. 'Come, take courage, you are but a 'young beginner; theſe things come of 'courſe. I ſhould be ſorry you were 'not capable of taking good counſel.'

They were now arrived at Mrs. Autumn's houſe. Lady D——'s woman ſent up word, that ſhe was come with the perſon her lady had recommended to her ladyſhip; upon which both were ordered to go up ſtairs.

They found the lady giving audience to a milliner, a mantua-maker, and a mercer. Several pieces of ſilk lay unrolled before her; and a vaſt variety of ribbands, lappets, egrets, and other faſhionable trifles, were ſpread upon a table, on which ſhe leaned, in a thoughtful poſture, as unable to determine her choice.

When Henrietta and her companion entered, ſhe raiſed her eyes, and nodding familiarly at Lady D——'s woman, who approached her, curtſeying; 'You find 'me exceſſively buſy, Mrs. Ellis,' ſaid ſhe: 'well, what has Lady D—— ſent 'me? Oh! a good likely body,' purſued ſhe, looking at Henrietta. 'My 'compliments, Mrs. Ellis, and thanks. 'You ſee I have hardly time to ſpeak 'to you. The young woman may ſtay, 'I'll talk to her preſently.'

Mrs. Ellis withdrew; and the lady reſuming her contemplative poſture, gave Henrietta an opportunity of conſidering her at leiſure.

If Lady D——'s woman had not fixed her age at ſomewhat more than forty, ſhe would have concluded her to have been older, by the deep furrows in her face, her fallen cheeks, and the poor ſhrivelled hand that ſupported her head: but her dreſs ſpoke her ſcarce fifteen; a

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French fillet ſupplied the place of a cap, and ſerved to bind the few ſtraggling hairs that graced her temples, to a tête, which was ſo loaded with hair, that her head ſeemed to be of an enormous ſize. The reſt of her dreſs was ſuited exactly to the childiſh ornaments of her head; and, though no object could be more ridiculous, yet Henrietta beheld her with a ſerious concern; for true benevolence compaſſionates thoſe follies which unfeeling hearts ſacrifice to mirth.

Mrs. Autumn at length roſe up. 'That 'muſt be the thing,' ſaid ſhe, pointing to a pink and ſilver. She then gave ſome directions to her milliner; and, ſuddenly interrupting herſelf, turned with a lively air to the mercer, and aſked him, why he had not cut off the ſilk?

'Your ladyſhip did not tell me how 'much you wanted,' replied the tradeſman.

'Lord! I am the giddieſt creature,' exclaimed Mrs. Autumn. This matter, however, was ſoon ſettled: and the important buſineſs with the milliner diſpatched, ſhe diſmiſſed her trades-people; and, throwing herſelf with an affected air upon a ſettee, ordered Henrietta to come forward.

'I was afraid,' ſaid ſhe, 'that Lady 'D——, who is very fond of ſeeing 'grave ſolemn faces about her, had ſent 'me ſome antiquated creature that would 'have frightened me; but you ſeem to 'be a ſprightly young body: we ſhall 'agree very well, I hope.'

Henrietta curtſied.

'I hate old people,' purſued the lady; 'they are generally obſtinate and ſurly. 'God help us! we ſhall all be old if we 'live—but when one is in years one's 'ſelf, it is time enough to be plagued 'with the humours of thoſe that are. 'You will ſuit me extremely well.'

Henrietta curtſied again.

'You are no talker, I find,' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, a little chagrined that the hints ſhe had thrown out had produced nothing which could flatter her extreme deſire of being thought young. 'Well, 'there is no great harm in that; I ſhall 'take you upon Lady D——'s recom'mendation. As for terms——'

'Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, who now for the firſt time opened her mouth, 'they ſhall be whatever you think pro'per.'

'Very well,' ſaid the lady, 'we will 'talk no more about them, then; if you 'can find out how to pleaſe me, which 'will be no difficult matter I aſſure you, 'my place may prove a very advan'tageous one, and the ſooner you come 'the better.'

Henrietta told her, ſhe was ready to come whenever ſhe pleaſed. Upon which, Mrs. Autumn, with the pretty impatience of youth, aſked her, if it would be any inconvenience to her to come that very night?

Henrietta, who was naturally obliging, aſſured her it would not; and was diſmiſſed with a gracious ſmile for her ready compliance.

Mrs. Willis, who had flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould enjoy the company of her amiable friend for a few weeks at leaſt, was greatly diſappointed when ſhe found ſhe was to loſe her ſo ſoon; and gently blamed her for being ſo precipitate.

Henrietta gave her the character of the lady ſhe was going to live with, and repeated what ſhe had ſaid to her. 'You 'may be ſure,' added ſhe, 'that I ſhall 'never pleaſe Mrs. Autumn in the way 'ſhe expects to be pleaſed. Flattery is 'always mean; but to flatter folly, is, 'in my opinion, criminal. However, I 'gladly embraced the firſt opportunity 'that offered to ſhew my willingneſs to 'oblige, though I would not flatter her. 'You will hardly believe me, perhaps,' ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, 'when I tell you, that 'one of the greateſt bars to my happineſs, in my preſent humble ſituation, 'is the difficulty of pleaſing without 'wounding my own delicacy and candour. It is not eaſy to live well with 'our ſuperiors, and preſerve our integrity, but it is not impoſſible; and, if 'I fail in that attempt, I ſhall at leaſt 'have this ſatisfaction, that I ſuffer in 'the cauſe of virtue.'

'It requires all that ſweetneſs of temper 'which you poſſeſs,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'to live with a woman of Mrs. Autumn's fantaſtick turn, without being 'diſguſted with it. What an abſurdity, 'at fifty years to expect to be thought 'young! and to imagine that, by affecting the follies of youth, ſhe ſhall 'have the bloom of it alſo! Our ſex 'have been reproached with never cultivating our minds till we can no longer 'pleaſe by our perſons; but here is a 'woman who has not judgment enough 'to know when ſhe ought to reſign the 'hope of pleaſing by her perſon. Take

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'my word for it, you will be very un-
'happy with her, unleſs you reſolve to
'accommodate yourſelf to her humour,
'and ſoothe her in her ridiculous folly.'

'That I will not do,' replied Henrietta; 'and ſince I have learned not to 'fear poverty, my happineſs will never 'depend upon others.'

Mrs. Willis, finding ſhe could not prevail with her fair friend to alter her reſolution, acquieſced in it at length; and Henrietta, taking an affectionate leave of her, repaired to her new habitation.

CHAP. III.

WHICH SHEWS HENRIETTA IN HER NEW SERVICE, WHERE SHE ACQUITS HERSELF EXTREMELY ILL.

THE lady being engaged with company when Henrietta arrived, ſhe did not ſee her till late at night, when ſhe was ſummoned to undreſs her.

'Come hither, Henrietta,' ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe entered the room; 'I have 'ſeen Lady D—— ſince you was here. 'She has given me ſuch an advantageous 'account of your underſtanding, that 'I am reſolved to make you my con-'fidant.'

At the word Confidant Henrietta looked a little confuſed: but the lady, who did not obſerve her emotion, reclined her head upon her hand, and fixing her eyes on her glaſs, to ſee how this penſive attitude became her—

'I am certainly,' purſued ſhe, ſighing, 'the moſt unfortunate woman in 'the world! Benſon, if you would be 'happy, never marry.'

'I have no thought of marriage at 'preſent, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta.

'Ah, how I envy your freedom!' ſaid the antiquated fair; 'you are plagued 'with no unreaſonable jealouſy. Ben-'ſon, you will not be here long be-'fore you are a witneſs to my perſecu-'tions. I wiſh I could conceal them, 'but that is impoſſible.'

'I am ſorry, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, who was under a neceſſity of ſaying ſomething in anſwer to this ſtrange ſtuff, 'to hear that you have any thing to make 'you uneaſy.'

'It does not ſignify,' exclaimed the lady, with an emotion which ſhe herſelf took to be real; 'I ſhall be choaked if 'I don't ſpeak: may I depend upon 'your prudence, Benſon!—But I am 'ſure I may. Well, then, you muſt 'know there is a poor young fellow who 'pretends—But why do I ſay pretends '—who is deſperately—what ſhall I call 'it—who has an unconquerable, in-'vincible, hopeleſs, fatal, dying paſſion, 'for—for me, in ſhort. Is not this a 'ſhocking thing?'

'Indeed! Madam,' replied Henrietta, with great truth, 'I pity you extremely.'

'Aye, am I not greatly to be pitied, 'child?' ſaid the lady. 'Then the poor 'wretch cannot conceal his folly; and it 'makes Mr. Autumn ſo uneaſy, that 'really his temper is intolerable.'

'Pardon me, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta; 'but I am not ſurprized that Mr. 'Autumn is uneaſy at ſuch folly, as you 'juſtly call it.'

'Why, to be ſure, it is folly,' ſaid Mrs. Autumn: 'but then, if one re-'flects a little—It is not folly neither—'for love, you know, is an involuntary 'paſſion. So that—but you have a very 'unfeeling heart, Benſon; and yet, to 'judge by your looks, you ſhould have 'great ſenſibility. Pray, have you never 'felt the tender paſſion?'

'If you mean love, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'indeed I cannot ſay I have.'

'Well, you will be a happy creature,' ſaid the lady, ſighing, 'if you can al-'ways maintain this indifference: but 'poor Languiſh muſt not expect to meet 'with much compaſſion from you. Poor 'wretch!' continued ſhe, laughing, 'I 'cannot help triumphing a little; I have 'nick-named him Languiſh from his 'eternal ſighing, and the melancholy 'roll of his eyes. Mr. Autumn can-'not endure to hear me call him by this 'name; but I love to plague him a lit-'tle now and then: what ſignifies power, 'if one does not ſhew one has it. Yet 'he ought to be ſatisfied with me for 'what I did this evening, when Lan-'guiſh indiſcreetly betrayed the violence 'of his paſſion, by eagerly running '(though there were two gentlemen 'nearer) to take up my glove which I 'had dropped: I took no notice of the 'dying air with which he preſented it to 'me; but, as if his touch had polluted 'it, I received it haughtily from him, and 'threw it aſide. Sure this inſtance of 'diſdain was enough to ſatisfy a jealous 'huſband; yet mine, inſtead of looking

'pleaſed,

'pleaſed, coloured with jealouſy and 'rage, and gave me ſuch furious glan-'ces—however, this will always be the 'caſe, where there is ſo great a diſpro-'portion in age; Mr. Autumn is not 'leſs than forty. But hey-day! is the 'girl aſleep?' continued ſhe, looking at Henrietta, who ſtood fixed in thought; for the abſurd affectation of her miſtreſs gave her matter enough for reflection. 'Come, undreſs me: Mr. Autumn will 'wonder at my long ſtay; and as he is 'ingenious in tormenting himſelf, he 'will poſſibly ſuſpect that I have been 'reading a letter from this rival of his; 'but there he over-rates his preſump-'tion; he has not ventured to write to 'me yet, his paſſion is only expreſſed 'in ſighs and looks.'

Henrietta made haſte to obey her, her patience being almoſt exhauſted; for Mrs. Autumn had got on a ſubject which ſhe knew not how to quit; and her women being the only perſons to whom ſhe could utter theſe extravagancies, without any danger of being mortified with uncaſtick hints of age, and ſuch envious and unjuſt reflections, ſhe made herſelf amends with them for the reſerve ſhe was, much againſt her will, obliged to maintain with others.

Henrietta was at length ordered to wait on her to her chamber, and ſoon after retired to her own, greatly out of humour with her miſtreſs, and not a little diſpleaſed at herſelf, to find that her philoſophy, by which ſhe was enabled to bear the change of her fortune with patience and reſignation, could not guard her againſt fretfulneſs and diſguſt at the follies ſhe was forced to be witneſs to.

Mrs. Autumn, like other modern ladies, lay in bed always till it was very late: this being one of thoſe happy expedients for killing time (as the faſhionable phraſe is) which, to diſcover, employs the inventions of perſons of rank and fortune. Henrietta had attended three whole hours in her lady's dreſſing-room, in expectation every moment of being ſummoned to aſſiſt her to riſe, when Mr. Autumn at length entered the room.

His ſervant, while he was dreſſing him, had told him, that his lady's new woman, whom he had a glimpſe of as he paſſed by her on the ſtairs, was the greateſt beauty he ever beheld; ſo that, being curious to ſee her, he came to breakfaſt with his wife that morning.

Henrietta roſe up at his entrance; Mr. Autumn bowed, looked at her attentively, and thought his man had taſte. But he was ſtill more ſtruck with her noble air than the charms of her face, and felt an uneaſy emotion when he ſaw her continue ſtanding, with that humble reſpect which, although it became her ſituation, ſeemed little ſuited to the dignity of her appearance. 'Is not Mrs. 'Autumn up, Madam?' ſaid he, not being able to forbear uſing that reſpectful ſtyle. Henrietta, ſuppoſing he did not know her rank in his family, replied,

'I expect my lady will ring every 'moment, Sir.'

'Pray let her know that I am come 'to breakfaſt with her,' ſaid Mr. Autumn.

Henrietta went immediately into her lady's chamber, and, finding her awake, delivered her meſſage.

'Lord bleſs me!' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, 'what new whim is this? He does not 'uſe to invade my apartment in a morn-'ing: I ſuppoſe he is come to teaze 'me with ſome of his jealous fancies. 'Well, ſince it muſt be ſo, order break-'faſt to be ſent in, and come to me di-'rectly.'

'What a ridiculous woman is this,' thought Henrietta, as ſhe went out of the room, 'to torment herſelf, at her 'age, with the notion of her huſband 'being jealous of her!'

The good lady, when ſhe returned, charged her not to leave the room while they were at breakfaſt. 'Your pre-'ſence,' ſaid ſhe, 'may perhaps be ſome 'reſtraint upon him.'

She then ſlipped on a night-gown, and went in a frightful diſhabille to attend her complaiſant ſpouſe; for ſhe was one of thoſe ladies who dreſs for every body but their huſbands.

Henrietta was not ſorry that ſhe was directed to wait, for ſhe was extremely deſirous of knowing whether her lady had any reaſon for the uneaſineſs ſhe expreſſed. Mr. Autumn's good humour and complaiſance ſoon put that matter out of doubt; but Mrs. Autumn was reſolved to perſuade her maid that her huſband was jealous; and, laughing affectedly, cried—

'Well, don't be chagrined, Mr. Au-'tumn, but I proteſt I dreamt of poor 'Languiſh laſt night!'

The huſband ſhook his head, winked at his wife, and pointed to Henrietta, as if

if he had ſaid, 'Don't expoſe yourſelf 'before your new ſervant.'

'Why, how you frown now!' purſued Mrs. Autumn; 'I knew you would 'be angry. Lord! what does it ſignify 'of whom one dreams? one does not al-'ways think of the perſons one dreams 'of. I wiſh I had not told you.'

'I wiſh you had not,' ſaid Mr. Autumn, biting his lip with vexation at her folly. The lady then lowering her voice, as if ſhe was not willing to be heard by Henrietta, though ſhe took care not to make it impoſſible, repeated—

'Trifles, light as air,
'Are to the jealous, confirmations ſtrong
'As proofs of holy writ.'

'You are well read in Shakeſpeare, 'Madam,' ſaid Mr. Autumn, who was willing to give another turn to the diſcourſe.

'Oh!' exclaimed ſhe, 'he has touch-'ed the paſſion of jealouſy finely in his 'character of Othello; I think the Moor 'was uneaſy about a dream too.'

Juſt then ſomebody tapped at the door; Henrietta opened it: one of the footmen delivered a meſſage from one lady, enquiring how Mrs. Autumn did, and a ſealed-up card from another.

While the ſervant was ſpeaking, Mrs. Autumn called out, 'What makes the 'fellow whiſper in that manner, as if the 'meſſage he brings was a ſecret!' Henrietta delivered her the card, which ſhe threw upon the table without opening it. 'I am reſolved,' ſaid ſhe, 'to turn that 'blockhead away; his myſterious man-'ner is enough to put ſtrange fancies 'into people's heads.'

'The ſtrange fancies are all your 'own,' ſaid Mr. Autumn, peeviſhly.

'I thought it would be ſo,' cried the lady; 'you are out of humour. What, 'is this ſealed-up card the grievance? 'Come, we will open it, and you ſhall 'know the contents.'

'Indeed I will not,' ſaid Mr. Autumn, riſing; 'I have not the leaſt 'curioſity about the contents.—Good 'morning to you, my dear; I am going 'out.'

'Well, Benſon,' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, as ſoon as her huſband had left the room, 'is not this a comfortable life I live? 'What a paſſion that poor man is in!'

'Was Mr. Autumn angry, Madam?' ſaid Henrietta.

'To be ſure he was,' ſaid the lady; 'did you not obſerve it?'

'Indeed, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'Mr. Autumn did not ſeem to me to be 'angry.'

'No, really!' ſaid Mrs. Autumn; 'you have a great deal of penetration, 'it muſt be confeſſed. You think you 'are very diſcreet now, but you are 'miſtaken. However, I charge you, 'don't goſſip among your companions 'about Mr. Autumn's unhappy jea-'louſy; I don't want the world to know 'what I ſuffer upon that account.'

'I never will mention it, Madam, 'to any body,' replied Henrietta.

'Nay, for that matter,' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, 'you might mention it without 'any bad intention, by way of pitying 'me, or ſo; and, perhaps, I ſhould not 'think the worſe of you. But if you 'can be ſilent, Benſon, you will oblige 'me; reports of this kind, you know, 'ſhould not be circulated.'

'They never ſhall by me, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta.

'Enough, enough,' cried Mrs. Autumn; 'I hate long ſpeeches.'

Henrietta was pleaſed with a declaration which enjoined her ſilence; for if it be tireſome to liſten to the ſallies of affectation and impertinence, it is much more ſo to be obliged to anſwer them.

CHAP. IV.

GIVES THE READER HOPES OF A FAVOURABLE CHANGE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR FAIR HEROINE.

HENRIETTA had exerciſed her patience for ſome weeks in the ſervice of Mrs. Autumn; but every day producing new inſtances of her folly, ſhe reſolved to quit her as ſoon as the counteſs came to town. She conceived ſhe was in ſome degree accountable to that lady for her actions, ſince it was through her recommendation that ſhe had been introduced to Mrs. Autumn; and ſhe thought it neceſſary, for the juſtification of her conduct, to have ſo conſiderable a witneſs of it's being irreproachable.

Her lady, though ſhe found herſelf always diſappointed in that complaiſance to her whims which ſhe endeavoured to exact from her, yet ventured to make

her a propoſal, which her own want of delicacy hindered her from ſeeing the impropriety of.

She had taken it into her head to try her ſuppoſed lover's conſtancy; and therefore wrote a letter to him, in the character of a lady unknown, on whoſe heart he had made a deep impreſſion, but who was reſolved not to diſcover herſelf till ſhe knew whether his was wholly diſengaged.

This letter, ſhe doubted not, would produce a declaration that would afford matter of great triumph to herſelf, who ſhe ſuſpected was the ſecret object of his adoration.

She acquainted her woman with her ſcheme, and gravely deſired her to copy the letter, for Languiſh, ſhe ſaid, knew her hand.

Henrietta bluſhed with ſurprize and ſhame at this improper requeſt, and very frankly begged to be excuſed from complying with it.

'What!' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, a little confuſed, 'you diſpute my commands, then!'

'I never refuſed to obey any of your commands before, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'but this (pardon me, Madam) appears ſo ſtrange.'

'You do not dare to ſuſpect my virtue, I hope?' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, in a lofty accent.

'It does not become me, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'to cenſure your actions.'

'No, certainly,' replied the lady, 'nor to refuſe to do any thing that I order you to do: but I would fain know if you, in your great wiſdom, think there is any thing improper in this little piece of gallantry.'

'My opinion is of no conſequence, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'I only beg to be excuſed from copying it.'

'Well, no more of the letter,' cried Mrs. Autumn, haſtily: 'perhaps I had only a mind to try your diſcretion; perhaps, too, I ſhall like you the better for your ſteadineſs. Be modeſt and reſerved, and you will be ſure of my approbation. Were you the beſt ſervant in the world, you would not do for me, unleſs you were extremely modeſt. And, now you know my mind, be cautious how you behave: modeſty is a ſure recommendation to my favour; I can pardon any fault in my ſervant but want of modeſty.'

Henrietta, from this declaration, had reaſon to think herſelf pretty ſure of her lady's favour; for the ſevereſt prude that ever declaimed againſt the monſtrous levity of her own ſex, could not have objected to the propriety of her behaviour: but, unhappily for her, ſhe was that very day guilty of a fault, by which ſhe incurred very ſhocking ſuſpicions; for having neglected to fill her lady's ſmelling-bottle with ſome freſh Eau de Luce, Mrs. Autumn declared, that ſuch heedleſſneſs muſt neceſſarily proceed from her having her thoughts continually employed upon fellows; and telling her, that ſhe could not endure ſuch a creature in her ſight, ordered her to be gone immediately.

Henrietta did not think proper to offer any anſwer to this ſtrange charge; but quitting her preſence immediately, and her houſe a few moments afterwards, ſhe returned to Mrs. Willis, who, ſeeing her alight at her door, eagerly flew to receive her.

'I have great news for you, my dear Miſs,' ſaid ſhe: 'I was this moment preparing to ſet out in a coach to bring you a letter, which was left here by one of your uncle's ſervants. It is very true,' purſued ſhe, ſeeing Henrietta look ſurprized. 'I aſked the young man, who he came from? and he ſaid, the Earl of ——. You may believe I am impatient to know the contents of this letter. Come, my dear, and read it; I hope all your troubles are over now.'

Henrietta receiving the letter from her, which ſhe took out of her pocket, followed her into the parlour, and breaking the ſeal—

'It is my uncle's hand, indeed,' ſaid ſhe, 'and this is what he writes:'

'Mrs. Courteney is deſired to call at the Earl of ——'s, to-morrow morning at twelve o'clock: he has ſomething to propoſe to her for her advantage.'

'Did I not tell you, Miſs,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, exultingly, 'that the ſtep you had taken would produce a favourable change in your fortune?'

'Don't be too ſanguine in your expectations, my dear Mrs. Willis,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; 'who knows but my uncle may have another Sir Iſaac Darby to propoſe to me? However, I will certainly wait upon him, and, if poſſible, will be punctual to the hour he has preſcribed me; but if nothing ſhould

'come

'come of this overture of his lordſhip's, 'I ſhall be your gueſt again for ſome 'time. I have left Mrs. Autumn.'

She then related to her ſome circumſtances of that lady's extravagant folly, and the cauſe and manner of their parting; which, together with their comments on Lord ——'s meſſage, furniſhed them with matter ſufficient for diſcourſe during the remainder of that day. What happened to our fair heroine the next, will be found in the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

DESTROYS THE EXPECTATIONS RAISED BY THE FOREGOING CHAPTER.

HENRIETTA was at her uncle's houſe exactly at the hour preſcribed her; and, upon ſending in her name, was deſired to walk into his lordſhip's library.

The earl was there to receive her: he had with him two of his daughters; but theſe young ladies withdrew immediately, after ſaluting her in a very diſtant manner, which ſhe returned with equal reſerve and coldneſs.

'Miſs Courteney,' ſaid his lordſhip, as ſoon as they were alone, 'I have 'been very angry with you for leaving 'your aunt in the ſtrange manner you 'did.'

'I am extremely obliged to your 'lordſhip,' replied Henrietta, 'for tak-'ing ſo much intereſt in any thing that 'concerns me.'

'You certainly acted very indiſcreet-'ly,' ſaid the earl; 'but what is paſt 'cannot be helped. You have had the 'good luck to make yourſelf friends, 'notwithſtanding this wrong ſtep. You 'have been at the counteſs of ——'s 'ſeat, I hear.'

'Yes, my lord,' anſwered Henrietta; 'I was there with ——'

'The counteſs is very much your 'friend,' interrupted his lordſhip, haſtily, 'but her ſon is more ſo.'

Henrietta bluſhed, and was ſilent.

'I will not,' purſued his lordſhip, 'examine into your motives for leaving 'Lady Meadows; but I will, if poſſible, 'accommodate matters between you, 'provided you will concur with me in 'my endeavours for that purpoſe.'

'I deſire nothing more earneſtly than 'to be reconciled to my aunt,' replied Henrietta.

'I believe it will be your own fault 'if you are not,' reſumed his lordſhip; 'and if you recover her favour, your 'good fortune will not ſtop there. To 'keep you no longer in ſuſpence, then, 'Lord B—— has declared a paſſion for 'you, has ſolicited my intereſt towards 'effecting a reconciliation between your 'aunt and you, that he may pay his ad-'dreſſes to you in a proper manner.'

'I am ſurprized that Lord B—— 'ſhould make ſuch a propoſal,' ſaid Henrietta; 'he is engaged to the daugh-'ter of a rich citizen.'

'No, not engaged,' replied the earl; 'the match has been propoſed, and he 'has viſited the young woman.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Henrietta, 'the affair is much farther advanced.'

'Well, well,' interrupted his lordſhip, 'we will ſuppoſe that the writings 'are drawn and every thing ſettled; 'but they are not married, nor engaged 'neither.

'His inclinations, you find, have 'taken another turn: you have no rea-'ſon to blame him for this, I am ſure; 'and it would be ſtrange indeed, if a 'man of his rank and fortune was to 'mind the cenſures of the vulgar.'

Henrietta was ſilent. His lordſhip proceeded.

'Lord B—— will find it difficult, no 'doubt, to prevail upon the earl to 'break off this treaty, and conſent to 'his marrying you, though Lady Mea-'dows ſhould offer to make you her 'heir; becauſe in that caſe your fortune 'would be ſtill leſs than that of this citi-'zen, whom he has choſen for him. 'Nevertheleſs, he does not deſpair of 'effecting this, provided your aunt will 'do for you what it is expected ſhe 'would before you was ſo unhappy as 'to diſoblige her. In this Lord B—— 'ſufficiently ſhews the ſincerity and ar-'dour of his paſſion. It is your part 'now to convince him that you are not 'ungrateful.'

'What would your lordſhip have me 'to do?' ſaid Henrietta.

'I would have you ſubmit to your 'aunt,' ſaid the earl, 'and regain her 'affection, if poſſible. Lord B—— has 'reaſon to expect this compliance from 'you.'

'I will do every thing I ought to do,' replied Henrietta, 'to recover my aunt's 'favour, and this without any view to 'Lord B——'s offers.'

'Well, we shall not examine too 'nicely into that matter,' interrupted his lordship, smiling. 'All that re-'mains to be done, is this: I will see 'Lady Meadows myself; she will be in 'town soon, I suppose; Lord B——'s 'proposal, which I will acquaint her 'with, will captivate her attention, and 'be your best justification. As for what 'little concessions she may expect from 'you, I shall leave them to be settled by 'yourselves.'

'There are certain concessions, how-'ever,' said Henrietta, 'which it is im-'possible for me to make, and which, if 'my aunt insists upon as the necessary 'conditions of a reconciliation between 'us, I must still continue under her dis-'pleasure, and hazard all the conse-'quences of it.'

'I am afraid you are going to say 'some silly thing or other,' interrupted his lordship, rising from his seat; which motion Henrietta understanding as a hint for her to hasten her departure, rose also.

'I will detain your lordship no longer,' said she, 'than just to tell you, that some 'time ago my aunt proposed to me to 'settle all her fortune upon me, provided 'I would embrace the Roman-catholick 'religion.'

'A noble offer, upon my honour!' said his lordship; 'and did you refuse 'it?'

'Would your lordship have had me 'accept of it?' said Henrietta.

'What signifies what I would have 'had you do?' replied the earl, peevish-ly. 'What did the consideration of 'your own interest suggest to you?'

'To refuse it, my lord,' answered Henrietta, 'and I did so.'

'I find you are a very romantick girl,' said his lordship; 'I am resolved to trou-'ble myself no more about your af-'fairs.'

'I hope it will not be imputed to me 'as a crime,' said Henrietta, 'that I 'could not be bribed to change my re-'ligion.'

'Change your religion!' repeated the earl, 'what necessity was there for chang-'ing your religion? You might have 'humoured the old woman, have gone 'with her to mass, and conformed to 'some of her superstitious ceremonies, 'and be a good Protestant in your heart 'notwithstanding; the world, knowing 'your motives, would have commended 'you for such a prudent conduct. I see 'there is nothing to be done with you,' pursued he, after a little pause. 'For 'the sake of the unfortunate man, who 'was your father, I would have been 'glad to have seen you well married; 'but Lord B—— is not such a fool as 'to take you without a fortune; and, 'as you cannot reasonably have any ex-'pectations but from Lady Meadows, 'who has no children, and may leave 'her fortune to whom she pleases, with-'out doing any body injustice, you know 'best whether it is worth your while to 'make a proper submission to her or 'not.'

'I will never make an improper one,' said Henrietta.

'To be sure,' said his lordship, 'your 'own wisdom is to be judge of that.'

'No, my lord,' replied Henrietta; 'you shall, if you please, be judge—if 'my conscience—'

'Pray, let me hear nothing about 'your conscience,' interrupted the earl; 'it is not my business to set matters even 'between you and your conscience; 'your aunt's popish confessor, who is 'likely to be her heir, is skilful in those 'things: yet I would not advise you to 'consult him neither, for he is an in-'terested person; but remember, that 'you may either secure to yourself a 'good estate, and marry a very deserv-'ing young nobleman, or continue in 'the obscurity and want your father left 'you in, which is all the legacy he be-'queathed you. Think well of this, 'and then let your conscience determine. 'I do not advise you to do any thing 'against it.'

'My resolution is already fixed,' said Henrietta: 'my conscience will neither 'permit me to change my religion, nor 'to counterfeit a change of it.'

'Do you insinuate by that,' said his lordship, hastily, 'that I advised you to 'do either the one or the other?'

'My aunt already knows my mind,' said Henrietta, evading a question which she could not answer truly without of-fending him: 'I have nothing to hope 'for from your lordship's interposition, 'unless she has been pleased to give up 'this point; and I shall chearfully re-'turn to that poverty my father be-

'queathed

'queathed me, ſince, with it, he be-
'queathed me piety and virtue.'

'It is a pity he did not leave you
'prudence alſo,' ſaid the earl, who found ſomething very provoking in this laſt ſpeech; 'you would not then have
'diſobliged your aunt by your ſcanda-
'lous elopement from her, which has
'reduced you to the miſerable condition
'you are now in, ſo that your friends
'know not how to take notice of you.'

'Friends! my lord,' replied Henrietta, riſing in her temper; 'I have no
'friends, I have only relations.'

'That is likely to be their misfor-
'tune,' ſaid his lordſhip, who was very angry at this ſarcaſm: 'your undutiful-
'neſs to your aunt makes you un-
'worthy of the notice of your relations;
'and I declare to you plainly, that from
'this moment I will never concern my-
'ſelf about you.'

Henrietta diſdained to make any anſwer to this unjuſt and cruel ſpeech: but curtſied in ſilence, and withdrew; leaving the earl very well ſatisfied with himſelf for the tender and parental part he had acted towards his brother's daughter, and furniſhed with excellent reaſons for never ſeeing her more.

'I had provided a match for her,' ſaid he, that very evening, to an humble friend, who he knew would not fail to ſpread the report, 'not unworthy of a
'daughter of my own. She rejected my
'propoſal. She refuſed to make any
'ſubmiſſion to her aunt, whom I would
'have prevailed upon to be reconciled
'to her. Let her ſuffer the conſequen-
'ces of her obſtinacy and folly; I have
'done all that I ought to do, and am
'juſtified to the world.'

His lordſhip forgot to add, that the ſubmiſſion which was expected from her was nothing more than the change of her religion, and the match ſhe ſo obſtinately refuſed could not be effected without ſhe purchaſed a fortune by an impious hypocriſy. Nevertheleſs, the omiſſion of theſe trifling circumſtances gave ſuch a colour to Henrietta's behaviour, that ſhe was conſidered by all who heard her uncle's account of it, as an unhappy young creature, who would ruin herſelf, and be the blot of a noble family.

As for our fair heroine, ſhe foreſaw that her uncle would juſtify his neglect of her at her expence. She had every thing againſt her; rank, fortune, power; that general prejudice which prevails againſt the unfortunate, and that as general ſervility which adopts the paſſions of the great. But theſe reflections filled her with no uneaſy apprehenſions; for there is this advantage in virtue, that it is ſufficient for itſelf, and needs not the applauſe or ſupport of others; it's own conſciouſneſs is it's beſt reward.

CHAP. VI.

IN WHICH LORD B—— SHEWS HIMSELF A TRUE MODERN LOVER.

HENRIETTA, before ſhe went home, waited upon Lady D——, to acquaint her that ſhe had left Mrs. Autumn. She avoided mentioning that lady's peculiarities, which had made it impoſſible to pleaſe her; but with great ſimplicity related the error ſhe had been guilty of, and the ſuſpicions ſhe had incurred by it, which occaſioned her diſmiſſion.

Lady D—— diverted herſelf for ſome time with the extreme delicacy of her whimſical friend; and then told Henrietta, that having ſtill a good opinion of her prudence and modeſty, notwithſtanding the reaſons Mrs. Autumn had to ſuſpect her, ſhe would place her about a young lady, a relation of her own.

Henrietta thanked her in very reſpectful terms, and took her leave, after ſhe had, at Lady D——'s deſire, left her a direction to her lodgings, that ſhe might know where to ſend for her when it was neceſſary.

At her return, ſhe found the faithful Mrs. Willis full of anxious impatience to hear the ſucceſs of her viſit to the earl. Henrietta, through reſpect to her uncle, concealed the greateſt part of his diſcourſe to her, but owned that ſhe had no expectations from him.

Mrs. Willis ſhrugged up her ſhoulders: 'Then it was as you ſuſpected,' ſaid ſhe; 'your uncle has propoſed ſome
'abſurd match to you, and you have
'forfeited his future favour by not
'complying with it.'

'You will be ſurprized to hear that
'Lord B—— has made an application
'to my uncle,' ſaid Henrietta.

'Surprized!' repeated Mrs. Willis;
'why, to be ſure: conſidering how your
'affairs are circumſtanced, this is a ge-
'nerous

'nerous way of proceeding. Well, I 'hope you begin now to have a favour-'able opinion both of his love and ho-'nour.'

'I am ſure I think highly of his pru-'dence,' replied Henrietta, ſmiling. 'Only mark the caution with which he 'acts in this affair: my poverty gave 'him hopes that I ſhould be an eaſy con-'queſt; and that paſſion which firſt ma-'nifeſted itſelf in an open attempt upon 'my honour, ſought afterwards to al-'lure me with bribes. It is not ſtrange 'that perſons who hold money to be the 'greateſt good, ſhould think it more 'than an equivalent for virtue. Here, 'however, he was diſappointed again, 'to his great aſtoniſhment, no doubt, 'and marriage is this honourable lover's 'laſt reſource; but this he does not offer 'till he is ſure I ſhall have a fortune, if 'not equal to that of my rival the packer's 'daughter, yet at leaſt ſufficient to juſ-'tify his choice in the opinion of the 'prudential part of the world; and per-'haps he expects I ſhould purchaſe the 'mighty bleſſing of his hand by the ſa-'crifice, the temporary ſacrifice at leaſt, 'of thoſe principles for which I have 'already ſuffered ſo much.'

'Have you any reaſon for this ſhock-'ing ſuſpicion?' interrupted Mrs. Willis.

'I think I have,' replied Henrietta: 'a reconciliation with my aunt is, it 'ſeems, a neceſſary preliminary to his 'addreſſes; and yet he heard from my-'ſelf upon what condition that recon-'ciliation could only be effected.' Henrietta, ſuddenly interrupting herſelf, cried out—'There he is; there is Lord 'B——.'

'Where? where?' ſaid Mrs. Willis, running to the window. 'It is certainly 'he,' ſaid Henrietta; 'he paſſed by in 'a chair.'

That inſtant they heard a loud rap at the door.

'As I live,' cried Mrs. Willis, in a violent flutter, 'he is come to viſit you. 'I hope you will ſee him, Miſs Cour-'teney: hear what he has to ſay, pray 'do; there can be no harm in that, I 'am ſure.'

'Well, well,' ſaid Henrietta, ſmil-ing at her ſolicitude, 'I will ſee him; 'let him be ſhewn into the other parlour, 'if you pleaſe.'

Mrs. Willis, curious to ſee this young lord, went herſelf to open the door. He bolted out of the chair; and, with a look and accent full of impatience, aſked her, if the young lady that lodged there was at home?

'Miſs Courteney, Sir?' ſaid Mrs. Willis.

'Yes,' replied he, haſtily; 'is ſhe 'at home? can I ſee her? Pray tell her 'a gentleman from ——— enquires for 'her.'

Mrs. Willis deſired him to walk into the parlour; ſaid ſhe would acquaint the young lady with his being there; and, a few moments afterwards, Henrietta appeared.

Lord B—— flew to meet her, with the air of a lover conſcious of the right he had to be well received; and taking her hand, which he reſpectfully kiſſed—

'Now,' cried he, exultingly, 'can 'you doubt the ardour of my paſſion 'for you? and will you not at length 'confeſs that it is poſſible for a man to 'deſerve you?'

'Certainly, my lord,' replied Hen-rietta, 'it is very poſſible.'

'May I periſh if I think ſo!' ſaid he; 'but how poorly would words expreſs 'my adoration of you! Judge of the 'purity, the ardour of my love, by 'what I have done to make you mine. 'Have you not ſeen your uncle, Miſs 'Courteney?'

'I have, my lord,' replied Henrietta.

'You have!' repeated his lordſhip; 'and in that grave, cold accent, too! 'Surely my ſentiments and deſigns are 'ſtill unknown to you: it is impoſſible 'elſe that you ſhould be thus inſenſible, 'nay ungrateful, I will ſay—for I have 'given no common proofs of love, I 'think.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Henrietta, who had a mind to teaze this generous lover a little, 'you ſhall not ſuffer for 'your noble diſintereſtedneſs—you ſhall 'not reſign Miſs Cordwain and her im-'menſe fortune for me.'

'Name not her fortune,' cried Lord B——; 'were it millions I would re-'fuſe it for you.'

'Nay, now, your lordſhip is quite 'romantick,' ſaid Henrietta, 'to pre-'fer to a rich heireſs an unhappy young 'woman, deſerted by her relations, and 'reduced to ſeek a ſubſiſtence by her la-'bour.'

'Call not my paſſion romantick,' in-terrupted

terrupted Lord B——, 'becauſe it ſoars 'above common conceptions: a mind ſo 'elevated as yours might give it a juſter 'epithet.'

'Were my aunt,' purſued Henrietta, 'to leave me her whole eſtate, you would 'ſtill make no inconſiderable ſacrifice 'by quitting Miſs Cordwain for me, 'ſince my fortune would then be in-'ferior to her's. But you know, my 'lord, I have no expectations from Lady 'Meadows: I have declared to my uncle 'the hard conditions upon which ſhe 'offers to make me her heir, conditions 'that I never will accept of; and there-'fore I may well call your paſſion ro-'mantick, when, under ſuch circum-'ſtances, you could think of making 'an application to my uncle.'

'To be ſure, Madam,' ſaid Lord B——, whoſe countenance expreſſed at once ſurprize, confuſion, and diſappoint-ment, 'I did apply to the earl, not 'perſonally indeed. I contrived it ſo 'that a friend of mine, who is very in-'timate with his lordſhip, ſhould give 'him a hint of your ſituation, and the 'ſentiments I entertained for you: and, 'from the account my friend gave me 'of his ſucceſs in his negotiation, I con-'ceived that you might be prevailed 'upon—that is, that you would con-'ſider. For might I not hope, my dear 'Miſs Courteney, that you would not 'be inſenſible of my affection?'

Here his lordſhip pauſed, and looked on Henrietta with a languiſhing air, ſeeming to wiſh and expect that her ten-derneſs would ſpare him a farther ex-planation; but our fair heroine, who did not chuſe to collect his meaning from the abrupt and unconnected ſentences he had uttered, continued maliciouſly ſilent, as if ſhe waited for the end of his diſcourſe.

'I ſee,' reſumed he, 'that I have not 'been happy enough to inſpire you with 'any tender ſentiments for me. Par-'don me, Miſs Courteney, but I muſt 'be ſo free as to tell you that, if you 'were not prepoſſeſſed in favour of 'another perſon, the proofs I have given 'you of my affection would not be re-'ceived with ſuch indifference.'

'There needs not any ſuch prepoſ-'ſeſſion,' replied Henrietta, vexed at this hint, 'to make me receive with in-'difference the proofs you have hitherto 'given me of that affection your lord-'ſhip boaſts of. Am I to reckon among 'theſe proofs, my lord, the inſult you 'offered me at Mrs. Eccles's, and the 'ſtrange declaration you made me in 'the country?'

'Ah, how cruel is this recapitulation 'now!' cried Lord B——: 'do I not 'do juſtice to your birth, your beauty 'and virtue, by my preſent honourable 'intentions?'

'It is not enough for me, my lord,' ſaid Henrietta, 'that your intentions 'are honourable now; to have merited 'my eſteem, they ſhould always have 'been ſo: but, to ſpeak plainly, I am 'ſtill doubtful of your intentions.'

'Doubtful ſtill of my intentions!' re-peated Lord B——: 'have I not de-'clared them to your uncle, Madam? 'have I not ſolicited his intereſt with 'you?'

'Suppoſe that obtained, my lord,' ſaid Henrietta, 'and that it has all the 'weight with me you could wiſh.'

'Why, then, we ſhall be happy, my 'angel,' cried he, taking her hand, and preſſing it to his lips. 'You will be 'reconciled to your aunt, and I may 'hope for my father's conſent to our 'union.'

'A reconciliation with my aunt is 'impoſſible,' ſaid Henrietta, withdraw-ing her hand.

'Say not that it is impoſſible,' replied Lord B——, 'but that you have not 'complaiſance enough for me to attempt 'it.'

'Did I not know it to be impoſſible,' reſumed Henrietta, 'I would attempt it 'for my own ſake; but nothing leſs 'than the ſacrifice of my religion will 'ſatisfy my aunt: on this condition in-'deed ſhe promiſes to ſettle her whole 'eſtate upon me; I think I once told 'your lordſhip ſo.'

'You did, my dear Miſs Courteney,' interrupted Lord B——; 'and I adore 'you for your ſteady adherence to your 'principles.'

Henrietta was a little ſtartled at ſo un-expected a declaration; but Lord B—— did not ſuffer her to remain long in the error his laſt words had occaſioned.

'If Lady Meadows was not ſuch a 'bigot,' purſued he, 'excuſe my free-'dom, Miſs, we might expect that ſhe 'would receive my propoſals with plea-'ſure, and make ſuch conceſſions in fa-'vour of her niece, as might engage my 'father's conſent to our marriage: but 'ſince this is hopeleſs, is it reaſon-'able that you ſhould be the victim of

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'her obſtinacy? By ſeeming only to 'comply with your aunt's deſires, all 'obſtacles to our union will be removed; 'a temporary compliance is all that is 'neceſſary to ſecure to you a fortune, 'and a rank in life ſuitable to your birth. 'Do not imagine that I wiſh to ſee you 'a proſelyte to the religion ſhe profeſſes: 'no, if any thing could weaken my 'paſſion, your being capable of ſuch a 'change, upon intereſted motives, would 'do it. I love you; I repeat it again, 'I love you for your piety.'

'Then, to be ſure, my lord,' replied Henrietta, 'you think that a little 'diſſimulation in this caſe would be a 'virtue.'

'In your circumſtances,' reſumed Lord B——, 'it certainly would; for 'while your principles are unchanged, 'what do you ſacrifice, in yielding to 'your aunt, but externals only? This 'ſacrifice your intereſt, your happineſs, 'demands of you: let me add alſo, that 'you owe it to a man who loves you 'with the ardour I do. And ſurely, 'to induſtriouſly ſeek occaſions of ſuf-'fering for a religion, which, if you 'could be contented with ſecretly pro-'feſſing, you would be happy yourſelf, 'and make others happy alſo, is to give 'the world reaſon to ſuſpect that oſtenta-'tion has a greater ſhare in your reſolves 'than piety. Therefore, my dear Miſs 'Courteney, you ſee it is not the ſacrifice 'of your religion that I require of you, 'but of the reputation of ſuffering for 'it.'

'Well, my lord,' replied Henrietta, who had liſtened to him with great calmneſs, 'if ever I was in doubt of your 'intentions, you have clearly explained 'them now: of them, and of the ſen-'timents you have avowed, you may 'collect my opinion, when I declare 'to you, that if you had worlds to 'beſtow on me, I would not be your 'wife.'

'Is this your reſolution, Miſs Cour-'teney?' ſaid his lordſhip.

'It is, my lord,' ſhe replied: 'a 'reſolution juſtifiable upon your own 'great principle, intereſt. It is my in-'tereſt I conſult, when I prefer poverty 'and ſervitude to the fortune my aunt 'can give me; becauſe the ſilent teſti-'mony of a quiet conſcience is, in my 'opinion, of infinitely more value than 'riches. It is intereſt by which I am 'influenced, when I refuſe your offered 'alliance, becauſe I am ſure I could not 'be happy with a man whom I cannot 'eſteem.'

'Hold, Madam, hold,' interrupted Lord B——, 'this is too much: I have 'not deſerved this treatment; but I 'thank you for it; yes, from my ſoul 'I thank you for it; it has helped to re-'ſtore my ſenſes. I have been fooliſh, 'very fooliſh, I confeſs.'

His lordſhip, indeed, looked fooliſh enough when he pronounced theſe words, which were ſucceeded by a pauſe of ſeveral minutes: then ſuddenly ſtarting from his ſeat, and bowing with an affected negligence—

'The beſt apology I can make, Ma-'dam,' ſaid he, 'for the importunate 'viſit I have paid you, is to aſſure you 'I never will repeat it.'

Henrietta curtſied gravely without anſwering him; and having rung the bell for a ſervant to attend him to the door, went into the room where her friend was ſitting. Lord B—— ſtopped, looked back, and, finding ſhe had withdrawn, he ruſhed out haſtily, and flung himſelf into his chair, glad of his eſcape, and congratulating himſelf upon the victory he had gained over his paſſion; for, in the firſt emotions of his grief at parting, he had almoſt reſolved to declare he would marry her without any fortune: but her diſappearing ſo ſuddenly, gave him time for a moment's reflection, and that was ſufficient to hinder him from being guilty of an imprudence which he now trembled at the thoughts of.

It is ſo difficult for mean and ſelfiſh perſons to conceive that any thing but private advantage can influence the reſolutions of others, that, notwithſtanding the proof Henrietta had given of her attachment to her religion, and her inviolable regard to truth, yet ſtill Lord B— ſuppoſed there muſt be ſome other latent motive for a conduct, in his opinion, highly ridiculous, and very inconſiſtent with that good ſenſe which it was apparent ſhe poſſeſſed.

Sometimes he fancied he had a rival; and then, to clear a doubt ſo tormenting, he was upon the point of returning to her, to offer her his hand upon her own conditions: but his avarice reſtrained him from making ſo dangerous a trial; ſhe might accept his offer; and, with all the paſſion he felt for her, he could not reſolve to marry her without a fortune.

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To ſtifle a thought which ſuggeſted to him deſigns ſo deſtructive to his intereſt, he endeavoured to perſuade himſelf that her obſtinacy, in refuſing to temporize a little when ſuch mighty advantages were in view, was the effect of female vanity, which ſought diſtinction at the expence of ſolid happineſs. In this opinion he was confirmed by his friend, whom he had employed to ſound the earl her uncle with regard to his propoſals, and to whom he now communicated the reſult of his interview with Henrietta.

'Depend upon it,' ſaid this ſagacious perſon, 'your goddeſs will deſcend 'from her romantick flights, when ſhe 'finds ſhe has almoſt ſoared out of hu-'man ken; and is much more likely to 'be laughed at for her extravagant folly, 'than admired and applauded for her 'extraordinary piety. Follow my ad-'vice,' purſued he, 'ſuffer your miſtreſs 'to believe you have broke her chains; 'if intereſt does not make her wiſh to 'recal you, vanity will. Few women 'can endure that a lover ſhould eſ-'cape them; and, to recover their in-'fluence, they often make conceſſions, 'which, in the zenith of their power, 'they would have thought impoſſible.'

Lord B—— improved a little upon his friend's ſcheme, and reſolved to continue his addreſſes to Miſs Cordwain, to pique Henrietta, he ſaid; but, in reality, he was as much in love with her fortune, as with the perſon of our fair heroine; and was not willing to hazard the loſs of the one, while it was yet doubtful whether he ſhould ever poſſeſs the other.

CHAP. VII.

WHICH CONCLUDES THE FOURTH BOOK OF THIS HISTORY.

HENRIETTA having acquainted Mrs. Willis with what had paſſed in her interview with Lord B——, the good woman, who had flattered herſelf that the affair would have ended more happily (though more honourably it could not) for her fair friend, conjured her, with tears of anxious tenderneſs, not to think of going to ſervice again, but to allow the counteſs, whom her conduct with regard to her ſon muſt neceſſarily oblige very highly, to employ her good offices with Lady Meadows in her favour, that a reconciliation might be effected, without thoſe ſhocking conditions which had at firſt been propoſed to her.

'If I thought ſuch an application 'would be ſucceſsful,' replied Henrietta, 'I would readily conſent to it. 'For you may eaſily imagine, my dear 'Mrs. Willis, that this low condition 'is not my choice: but I know my 'aunt's temper; whatever ſhe deſires, 'ſhe deſires with ardour; and makes a 'merit of perſiſting obſtinately in a re-'ſolution ſhe has once formed. Her 'pride will be a more powerful advocate 'for me than any thing the counteſs 'can urge; to that I formerly owed my 'deliverance from dependence, more 'mortifying than ſervitude. This pride 'will no doubt be ſenſibly wounded, 'when ſhe finds that I am determined 'in my choice; if any thing can make 'her recede from her purpoſe, it will be 'the ſhame of ſeeing her niece reduced ſo 'low. But ſurely it is not the way to 'convince her I am really determined, 'if I allow my friends to teaze her with 'ſolicitations, when ſhe has already de-'clared her reſolution in ſuch ſtrong 'terms: ſhe will believe that I have en-'gaged them to make this trial; ſhe will 'be offended with their interpoſition, 'and perhaps be the leſs inclined to raiſe 'me from this obſcure condition, as ſhe 'will not have the merit of doing it from 'her own generoſity and tenderneſs, but 'at the inſtances of others. Time only, 'my dear Mrs. Willis, can produce any 'favourable change in my circumſtan-'ces; it will either ſoften the hearts of 'my relations, or it will blunt my ſenſe 'of the meanneſs of my condition, by 'familiarizing me to it. This I am ſure 'of at leaſt, that, in the conſciouſneſs 'of doing right, I ſhall always find an 'unfailing ſource of happineſs, however 'Providence may think fit to diſpoſe of 'me.'

'Ah, never doubt but you are the 'care of Providence, my dear Miſs,' cried Mrs. Willis: 'ſuch virtue and 'piety muſt ſooner or later be happy; 'Heaven and your own prudence direct 'you.'

'I have not always been prudent,' ſaid Henrietta, ſighing; 'but misfor-'tunes, as you once told me, teach us 'wiſdom.'

Mrs. Willis, obſerving an unuſual

penſiveneſs ſtealing over the ſweet features of Henrietta on this reflection, changed the diſcourſe to a leſs intereſting ſubject, and employed her utmoſt aſſiduity and tenderneſs to make the time ſhe ſtayed with her paſs agreeably.

A week being elapſed, and no meſſage coming from Lady D——, Henrietta began to apprehend that ſhe ſhould be diſappointed of a place, in which ſhe expected more ſatisfaction than ſhe had found in thoſe ſhe had hitherto been in, when ſhe was ſurprized with a viſit from the Counteſs of ——.

She flew to receive her with reſpectful joy. The lady tenderly preſſed her hand.

'I had buſineſs in the city,' ſaid ſhe, 'and I took this opportunity to call on 'you—And how do you do, my dear 'good girl?' purſued ſhe; 'have you 'any agreeable news to tell me? has 'your family relented yet?'

'I have no reaſon to think they have, 'Madam,' replied Henrietta.

'Shocking inſenſibility!' exclaimed the counteſs, lifting up her eyes; 'you 'have been very ill uſed too by Mrs. 'Autumn, my ſiſter tells me.'

Henrietta ſmiled, but was ſilent.

'Well, Miſs Courteney,' reſumed the counteſs, 'will you come and live with 'me as my friend and companion? I 'know your generous ſcorn of dependence; but it is the unworthineſs of 'the donor only, that can make benefits 'ſit heavy on a mind like yours: there 'is often as much greatneſs of ſoul in 'receiving as in conferring benefits; 'and when true friendſhip is the motive 'for giving, it is pride, not generoſity, 'to refuſe.'

'Do me the juſtice to believe, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'that I re'ceive this inſtance of your goodneſs 'with the deepeſt gratitude; but there 'is——'

'I underſtand you,' interrupted the counteſs—'my ſon; but I hope, when 'he is married, you will have no ob'jection to living with me as my friend.'

The counteſs, in ſpeaking theſe words, looked earneſtly on Henrietta.

'No, certainly, Madam,' cried ſhe, eagerly; 'I ſhall think myſelf happy in 'living with you in any ſituation.'

'I know not what to think of my 'ſon's conduct in this affair,' reſumed the counteſs; 'every thing is ſettled be'tween my lord and the young lady's 'father; but he ſtill finds pretences to 'delay the match.' Her eyes, as ſhe pronounced theſe words, ſeemed to demand an explanation of Henrietta.

'I am afraid, Madam,' replied ſhe, 'that I have been partly the cauſe of 'theſe delays.'

'That is candidly ſaid,' interrupted the counteſs; 'have you ſeen my ſon 'lately?'

'I have, Madam,' anſwered Henrietta; 'but your ladyſhip may be en'tirely eaſy.'

'Eaſy!' repeated the counteſs; 'why 'do you imagine that I am ſo inſenſible 'of your merit?—But you know, my 'good girl, Lord B—— is in honour 'engaged to Miſs Cordwain.'

'His lordſhip's partiality for me,' ſaid Henrietta, 'has induced him to 'carry this matter farther than (as he is 'circumſtanced) I think he ſhould have 'done. He has cauſed my uncle to be 'applied to; but this has produced no'thing, Madam. I told Lord B—— 'upon what conditions my aunt had 'offered to ſettle her eſtate upon me; 'and his lordſhip is convinced that I 'cannot comply with them. My reſo'lution is fixed, my Lord B—— knows 'it is ſo, and you have nothing to fear 'Madam, from any imprudence on his 'ſide, or any ungenerosity on mine. I 'ventured to promiſe that I would de'ſerve the confidence you was pleaſed 'to place in me on this occaſion, and I 'hope I have and ſhall continue to de'ſerve it.'

Notwithſtanding the delicate manner in which Henrietta ſtated the affair between her and Lord B——, yet the counteſs diſcovered that her ſon had ſhewn more prudence than generoſity, or even love, in his behaviour; and, by a ſtrange contradiction in the human heart, ſhe at once approved and condemned, was pleaſed with, yet aſhamed of his conduct; but, charmed with Henrietta's noble diſintereſtedneſs, her candour and ſincerity, ſhe embraced her with the tenderneſs of a mother, and perhaps with the more tenderneſs becauſe it was not likely ſhe ſhould be her mother.

'I am impatient,' ſaid ſhe, 'till I 'can have you with me, that I may have 'it in my power to ſhew you how greatly 'I both love and eſteem you.'

Henrietta thanked her with great politeneſs;

liteneſs; and then told her of Lady D——'s intentions to recommend her to a young lady, a relation of her's.

'Oh! Miſs Belmour, you mean,' ſaid the counteſs; 'my ſiſter mentioned 'it to me: ſhe is an agreeable young 'woman, has a very good fortune, and 'is entirely miſtreſs of herſelf. She will 'be much better pleaſed to receive you 'in the character of a companion than a 'ſervant, when ſhe knows your birth 'and merit.'

'I will owe obligations of that kind 'to none but yourſelf, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'and I beg this young lady 'may know no more of me than what 'is juſt neceſſary to recommend me to 'her good opinion as a ſervant.'

The counteſs conteſted this point with her for ſome time; but finding her not to be diſſuaded from her deſign, 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, kindly, 'you ſhall be indulged 'this once, but remember I claim your 'promiſe to come to me when a certain 'objection is removed; in the mean time 'we will ſettle you with Miſs Belmour 'in the way you chuſe. She will be 'with my ſiſter to-morrow morning; 'and if you come likewiſe, Lady D— 'will introduce you to her.'

Henrietta ſaid ſhe would not fail to attend Lady D——. Upon which the counteſs roſe up, kiſſed her at parting, and deſired ſhe would look upon her as one of her moſt faithful friends.

Our fair heroine had reaſon to be ſatisfied with the kind manner in which Lady D—— recommended her to Miſs Belmour, as well as with the reception that young lady gave her. She carried her home with her in her coach, and behaved to her with an affability that Henrietta could no otherwiſe account for, than by ſuppoſing the counteſs had diſcovered her true name and circumſtances to her. In this, however, ſhe was miſtaken: her young miſtreſs was in love; ſhe had occaſion for a confident. Henrietta's youth and gentleneſs promiſed her ſhe would be an indulgent one: beſides, her good ſenſe and the elegance of her perſon and behaviour ſo leſſened the diſtance between the miſtreſs and ſervant, that her pride was not wounded by the familiarity with which ſhe condeſcended to treat her, as the neceſſary prelude to the confidence ſhe was reſolved to repoſe in her.

Henrietta liſtened with complaiſance to the overflowings of a heart tender by nature, and wholly poſſeſſed, as ſhe thought, by a deſerving object; but when Miſs Belmour, in the courſe of frequent converſations on this exhauſtleſs theme, gave her to underſtand that this lover of whom ſhe boaſted was the huſband of another lady, from whom he had been parted ſeveral years, ſurprize, horror, grief, were ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on her countenance, that her lady began to repent of a confeſſion ſhe had made, in full confidence that her ſentiments, whatever they were, muſt needs be approved by her ſervant.

But it being now uſeleſs as well as dangerous to retract what ſhe had ſaid, ſhe was under a neceſſity of ſubmitting to the mortifying taſk of defending her conduct to one whoſe duty as well as intereſt ſhe had a moment before conceived it to be, to acquieſce in, or rather applaud all ſhe did.

She began with telling Henrietta, that Mr. Morley had, when very young, been forced, by an avaricious father, to marry a woman whom he could not love, and with whom he had been ſo miſerable, that a ſeparation was agreed to by the relations on both ſides.

Henrietta ſighed ſympathetically at this account. Miſs Belmour, encouraged by this mark of her ſenſibility, proceeded, with great fluency of language, to expatiate on the reſiſtleſs power of love: her lover's ſophiſtry had furniſhed her with arguments to prove, that the marriage he had been forced into was not binding in the ſight of Heaven, and that he was at liberty to beſtow his affections elſewhere. She treated marriage as a mere human inſtitution, adopted the ſentiments of Eloiſa, talked of an union of hearts, eternal conſtancy, generous confidence. Henrietta heard her with patience; but being out of breath at laſt, ſhe ſtopped, and ſeemed to expect a reply.

Our fair heroine, with all the humility becoming her ſtation, but at the ſame time with all the firmneſs of virtue, oppoſed the ſpecious arguments ſhe had urged, with others which reaſon, religion, and the purity of her own ſentiments, ſuggeſted to her: theſe, however, made very little impreſſion on Miſs Belmour. She yawned, ſmiled contemptuouſly, and was ſeveral times ready to interrupt her with an authoritative air, but refrained, from the conſideration that her woman was now, by the participation of

her ſecret, become her companion, if not ſomething more.

Henrietta, deſpairing to reſcue her unhappy miſtreſs, by motives of piety, from the ſnares that were laid for her, ſought even to intereſt her paſſions in the cauſe of virtue.

'You depend, Madam,' purſued ſhe, 'upon your lover's conſtancy; but what 'ſecurity can you have that he will be 'conſtant?'

'What ſecurity!' interrupted Miſs Belmour, rouſed to attention by ſo intereſting a queſtion; 'his vows.'

'Theſe vows, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'will expire with the paſſion that 'cauſed them: he will be conſtant as 'long as he loves, but how long he will 'love, is the doubt.'

'I am really vain enough to imagine,' replied Miſs Belmour, bridling, 'that 'thoſe few attractions I have received 'from nature, ſince they have gained, 'will fix his heart: I am quite free from 'any apprehenſions of that ſort, I can 'aſſure you.'

'You have charms, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'that entitle you to a worthier 'conqueſt than of a man who, not having it in his power to marry you, yet 'diſhonourably ſeeks to enſnare your 'affections.'

'It is natural to wiſh to be beloved 'by thoſe we love,' replied Miſs Belmour: 'I am convinced Mr. Morley 'loves me.'

'If he loved you ſincerely, Madam,' ſaid Henriettta, 'he would not make 'you unhappy; true love never ſeeks the 'ruin of it's object: diſintereſtedneſs is 'the teſt of love; try Mr. Morley's by 'that.'

'Mr. Morley has no mean, ſelfiſh 'deſigns, upon my fortune,' cried Miſs Belmour.

'His deſigns are mean and ſelfiſh in 'the higheſt degree,' replied Henrietta, 'ſince he expects that to make him happy 'you ſhould ſacrifice your peace, your 'honour, and your reputation; and 'ſhould he ſucceed in theſe deſigns, 'which Heaven forbid, the neglect he 'will ſoon treat you with will convince 'you, that love, when not founded on 'eſteem, cannot be laſting: for the contempt which even libertines feel for 'thoſe whom they have ſeduced, is a 'proof of that ſecret homage which all 'men pay to virtue.'

'If I thought Mr. Morley would ever 'fail in the reſpect and adoration he pays 'me now,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, 'I 'ſhould hate him.'

'The only way to preſerve that reſpect, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'is 'not to allow him to encourage any preſumptuous hopes: if you wiſh to keep 'his heart, engage his eſteem; he may 'one time or other, perhaps, be at liberty to offer you his hand.'

'Ah, Henrietta!' interrupted Miſs Belmour, ſighing, 'that time is very 'diſtant, I fear: but you have put 'ſtrange thoughts into my head; I have 'been to blame to ſuffer Mr. Morley 'to talk to me ſo freely of his paſſion: 'indeed I think he has been leſs reſpectful, ſince I ſuffered him to perceive 'that I preferred him to all the men I 'ever ſaw. I own to you freely, that it 'was my apprehenſions of loſing him 'that made me liſten to his arguments; 'for I thought, if I reduced him to deſpair, he would conquer his paſſion 'for me: but what if the very means I 'have uſed to keep his heart, ſhould 'prove the cauſe of his ſlighting me! 'Oh! you do not know what anxious, 'uneaſy doubts, you have raiſed in my 'mind! However, I am reſolved to 'behave with more reſerve to him for 'the future. I will try whether his 'paſſion is ſtrong enough to ſubſiſt of 'itſelf; for you have convinced me that 'the hopes with which I have hitherto 'fed it, have been leſs likely to nouriſh 'than to cloy.'

Henrietta would have been better pleaſed if ſentiments more pure had ſuggeſted this deſign; but it was a great point gained to prevail with her on any terms to diſcourage the addreſſes of a man whoſe love was a crime. She flattered herſelf likewiſe that this unexpected ſeverity in Miſs Belmour would produce an alteration in her unworthy lover's behaviour, which might favour her views of exciting her reſentment againſt him; and in this ſhe was not miſtaken.

Mr. Morley thought fit to be offended at the new plan of conduct Miſs Belmour had laid down for herſelf, and complained of it at firſt with that mixture of haughtineſs and ſubmiſſion which a man, who is ſure he is beloved, thinks he has a right to uſe; but, finding this had not the effect he deſired, he had recourſe to a perſonated indifference, in order to alarm her with the fear of loſing him.

Henrietta, whom she acquainted with every change in his behaviour, told her that this was the time to humble her imperious lover. 'You must either give 'him laws, Madam,' said she, 'or be 'contented to receive them of him: his 'aim was to degrade you to a mistress; 'he will love you, you see, upon no 'other condition.'

'I see it! I see it plainly!' interrupted Miss Belmour, bursting into tears; 'where is now that aweful love he pro'fessed for me, when a look, a smile, 'was a sufficient reward for all his suf'ferings!—Dear Henrietta, tell me what 'I shall do to shew him how much I hate 'and despise him.'

'Avoid him, Madam, as much as 'possible,' replied Henrietta. 'When 'you happen to meet him in company, 'suffer him not to speak to you apart, 'and receive no letters from him; per'sist in this conduct, and you will con'vince him that you are resolved not to 'purchase the continuance of his affec'tion by the sacrifice of your honour. 'If he is capable of a sincere and gene'rous passion, he will esteem and reve'rence that virtue which opposes his 'desires; and his esteem will strengthen 'his love.'

'Yes,' cried Miss Belmour, 'he 'shall find that he is not so sure of me 'as he has the presumption to imagine. 'I will tell him so myself, and see him 'again, but it shall be only to declare 'that I will never see him more. Give 'me pen and ink, my dear Henrietta: 'I will appoint him a meeting at Lady 'D——'s this evening; and while the 'company is engaged at cards, I shall 'have an opportunity to tell him the re'solution I have formed, and doubt not 'but I will speak to him in the severest 'terms my resentment can suggest: he 'shall know, to his confusion, that I 'am in earnest.'

'Indeed, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'that is not the way to persuade him 'that you are in earnest; let your actions 'speak for you; shun him carefully, and 'then he must be convinced that you do 'not feign.'

'I have thought of a way to torment 'him,' said Miss Belmour, after a little pause; 'I will go to Paris. Last year 'some ladies of my acquaintance pro'posed to me to go there with them, and 'I had almost consented; but the wretch, 'who braves me so insolently now, de'clared then that he could not support 'my absence, and seemed so overwhelm'ed with grief, that I put off my jour'ney for that time: but now, were he to 'offer to stab himself at my feet, it should 'not alter my purpose. I will write to 'him this moment, and let him know 'my design.'

'Let me intreat you, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'not to do that; go first, and 'write to him afterwards—And yet I 'could recommend a better way of pu'nishing this insolent lover.'

'Tell me what better way,' cried Miss Belmour, eagerly.

'It is to marry, Madam,' replied Henrietta. 'Chuse, out of that crowd of 'lovers who address you, him whom 'you think most deserving. Marriage 'will secure your peace, your honour, 'and reputation; and effectually punish 'the man, who made the sacrifice of all 'these the necessary condition of his 'love for you.'

This expedient was not at all approved of by Miss Belmour. She declared she hated the whole sex for Mr. Morley's sake; and Henrietta had no difficulty to believe her: however, she prevailed with her to promise that she would keep her intended journey secret till she was just ready to depart, that it might not seem as if she meant only to alarm her designing lover. This promise she observed so ill, that she declared that very day at Lady D——'s her intention to spend a few months in Paris. Mr. Morley, who was there, and who still kept up his assumed indifference, instead of endeavouring to alter her purpose, as she expected, coldly congratulated her on the pleasures she would enjoy in that enchanting metropolis. Miss Belmour came home ready to burst with rage and disappointment.

'I knew how it would be, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'if you talked of your 'design. Mr. Morley thinks he sees 'through the artifice of it: all you can 'do now is to hasten your departure.'

'I am resolved I'll set out to-morrow 'morning,' said Miss Belmour. 'No 'matter for preparations; pack up a few 'necessaries to take with us in the coach, 'and leave directions for my trunks to 'be sent after. When we come to Dover, 'if there is not a packet-boat ready to 'sail, I'll hire one at any price: I shall 'not be at rest till I have convinced this 'man I am really determined to avoid 'him.'

Henrietta

Henrietta kept up this ſpirit; and after ſhe had given proper directions to the houſekeeper, and ſent orders for the coach to be ready early in the morning, ſhe buſied herſelf in packing up, her lady aſſiſting, in a violent flutter of ſpirits, and wiſhing impatiently for the hour of departure.

Our fair heroine had ſome objections to taking this journey herſelf, but her concern for Miſs Belmour over-ruled them all. She was not willing to leave unfiniſhed the good work ſhe had begun; and ſhe was apprehenſive that, if the young lady was left to the guidance of her own paſſions, this ſudden ſally of reſentment would end in a reconciliation fatal to her virtue.

She would have been glad to ſee the counteſs before ſhe went, but there was no time for this viſit; therefore ſhe contented herſelf with writing to that lady, and to her friend Mrs. Willis. The counteſs received the news of this journey with great pleaſure, becauſe ſhe hoped that abſence would effectually cure her ſon's paſſion for Henrietta, the conſequences of which ſhe was ſtill apprehenſive of, notwithſtanding he had ſhewn an extraordinary prudence in the conduct of it.

But Mrs. Willis was very uneaſy, leſt any thing ſhould happen that might make her repent the removing herſelf thus from all her friends, and putting herſelf entirely in the power of a ſtranger. Had there been time for it, ſhe would have endeavoured to diſſuade Henrietta from going; but, recollecting that Mr. Damer was in France, and that they might poſſibly meet, ſhe reſolved to write to the old gentleman, and give him a full account of every thing relating to the ſituation of his fair perſecuted ward, not even omitting his ſon's doubtful behaviour with regard to her; for ſhe knew that, if they met, Henrietta would be ſilent upon that article; and yet it was neceſſary he ſhould know it, that he might be convinced her misfortunes were chiefly owing to his ſon's treachery; and this conſideration, ſhe hoped, would produce ſomething to her advantage.

HENRIETTA.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAP. I.

CONTAINS AN ADVENTURE, IN WHICH OUR HEROINE IS MORE THAN ORDINARILY INTERESTED.

IN the mean time, our fair travellers, having regulated their affairs in the beſt manner the extreme hurry they were in would admit, ſet out for Dover in Miſs Belmour's coach. That young lady, ſtill agitated with the violence of her reſentment, which Henrietta took care ſhould not abate, and elated with the hope of reducing her lover to deſpair, by thus leaving him, thought the horſes went too ſlow for her impatience. She wiſhed for wings to convey her at once far from him, and declared that ſhe never deſired to ſee him more; yet Henrietta obſerved that ſhe frequently looked out of the windows with an air of anxious expectation, and would ſigh when ſhe drew in her head again, as if ſhe had been diſappointed. Doubtleſs, ſhe had conceived hopes that her lover would follow her; and, conſidering this neglect as a new proof of his indifference, it redoubled her rage, and ſtrengthened a reſolution in which reaſon and virtue had very little ſhare.

This thought gave Henrietta extreme concern: her converſion promiſed no great permanency, ſince it was founded on ſuch motives; but all ſhe could now do was to manage her paſſions, for the time was not yet come to touch her heart by ſentiments of piety and virtue.

On their arrival at Dover, they found the Calais packet-boat ready to ſail. Miſs Belmour, who would fain have lingered at Dover a day, was not much pleaſed with this circumſtance, but her pride was concerned not to betray any irreſolution: accordingly ſhe embarked with a tolerable good grace; and the wind continuing fair, they ſoon landed at Calais.

Miſs Belmour having made the journey before, was under no embarraſſment how to conduct herſelf. She proceeded to the inn ſhe had formerly been at; and having hired a poſt-chaiſe for herſelf and Henrietta, and a horſe for her ſervant, ſhe ſet out immediately after dinner, and reached Boulogne that evening.

As the chaiſe ſtopped at the inn they put up at, two gentlemen alighted at the ſame time; one of whom hearing they were Engliſh ladies, advanced, and reſpectfully offered them his hand to help them out. Miſs Belmour, pleaſed with the graceful appearance of this ſtranger, politely accepted his aſſiſtance, which he likewiſe tendered to Henrietta, whoſe charms, at the firſt glance, made a powerful impreſſion on his heart.

His eyes told her this ſo intelligibly, that ſhe was under ſome confuſion; yet ſhe found in herſelf a kind of ſatisfaction at the attention with which he gazed on her, and was now for the firſt time ſenſible to the pleaſure of charming: but, accuſtomed to watch carefully over the motions of her own mind, ſhe checked this riſing vanity; and, a little aſhamed of the folly ſhe diſcovered in herſelf, ſhe haſtily withdrew her hand, which he ſtill held, as not being maſter enough of himſelf

ſelf to part with it, though ſhe was already out of the chaiſe; and thanking him by a graceful curtſey for his civility, ſhe followed Miſs Belmour into the room the landlady had conducted her to.

The young gentleman ſtood gazing after her as long as ſhe was in ſight; then turning to his friend, who was giving ſome orders to their footmen—

'Oh, Charles!' cried he, with a look half ſerious, half gay, 'my fatal hour 'is come!'

'What! I'll warrant you,' ſaid the other, 'you are ſhot through the heart 'with the glances of the younger of thoſe 'ladies; I obſerved how you gazed on 'her.'

'Is ſhe not a charming creature?' exclaimed the firſt; 'what features! what 'a complexion! what elegance in her 'whole form! I am ſure ſhe has wit; 'I ſaw her ſoul in her eyes.'

'Faith! I am half concerned for you,' interrupted Charles, with an affected ſeriouſneſs: 'this will be an unfortunate 'encounter, I am afraid.'

'Can we not think of ſome method 'to introduce ourſelves to them?' cried the other, without minding what he had ſaid: 'I ſhall not reſt till I find out who 'they are.'

'What will it ſignify to you to know?' replied Charles: 'they are going to Paris, 'and we to London.'

'Why, aye, that is true,' ſaid the other, 'we ſhall go different ways in 'the morning; and yet—what think 'you, my dear Charles, of going back 'to Paris for a few days, and we ſhall 'have an opportunity of eſcorting theſe 'fair travellers?—Come, it will be but 'a frolick, and I know you are no ene'my to them.'

'I don't like this frolick,' replied Charles; 'it has too ſerious an air: ſure 'you are ſtrangely charmed with this 'girl—juſt upon the point of ſeeing 'your father and your family, after a 'long abſence, and ſo ſuddenly to re'ſolve upon protracting your ſtay from 'them—I don't half like it, I confeſs; 'and this once, my lord, I muſt oppoſe 'your inclinations.'

'Oh, Sir, you are grave!' replied his lordſhip, a little ſullenly; 'you have a 'mind to exert the governor too; but 'let me tell you, that, conſidering the 'equality of our years, and the terms 'we have hitherto lived upon, this wiſ'dom is very unſeaſonable.'

The young lord, having ſaid this with ſome emotion, haſtily entered the houſe; and calling to the inn-keeper to ſhew him a room, went away, without taking any farther notice of his governor, who ſtood muſing for ſome time after he was gone, and then followed him, with an intention to bring him, if poſſible, to reaſon.

Upon his entering the room, he found his pupil leaning on a table, with a diſcontented air. He juſt raiſed his head, to ſee who it was that came in; and immediately reſumed his former poſture, without ſpeaking a word.

The governor looked at him a moment in ſilence; at laſt—

'This penſiveneſs,' ſaid he, 'and this 'cauſeleſs reſentment, are they not ſtrong 'arguments againſt my complying with 'your propoſal? The impreſſion this 'girl has made on your heart muſt needs 'be very great, ſince it can make you 'already forget that friendſhip you have 'vowed for me, and in which I placed 'ſo much happineſs.'

'It is you, not I, who ſeem to have 'forgot our mutual friendſhip,' replied the young nobleman, melted at thoſe laſt words: 'Why did you, my dear Charles, 'loſe the beloved friend and companion 'in the auſtere governor? is not this 'ſtrange affectation!'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied the governor, 'I ſhould be unworthy the title of 'your friend, if I was not attentive to 'your intereſt.'

'Was there ever any thing ſo abſurd,' interrupted his lordſhip, 'to 'make a ſerious affair of a little idle 'curioſity!'

'Don't you make a ſerious affair of 'it,' replied the governor, 'and I ſhall 'be contented.'

'Well, then, you conſent to go back 'to Paris with me,' ſaid the pupil.

'If you are reſolved to go,' anſwered the governor, 'to be ſure I will go with 'you.'

'Now you are my friend again,' ſaid the young lord, hugging him: 'I promiſe you, I will not ſtay long in Paris; 'but, we muſt be Freeman and Melvil 'once more, my dear Charles.—Ah, 'how many pleaſant adventures have 'we had under thoſe names!'

'If this proves of no greater conſequence,' reſumed the young governor, 'I ſhall not regret coming into your 'ſcheme; but I confeſs I am alarmed

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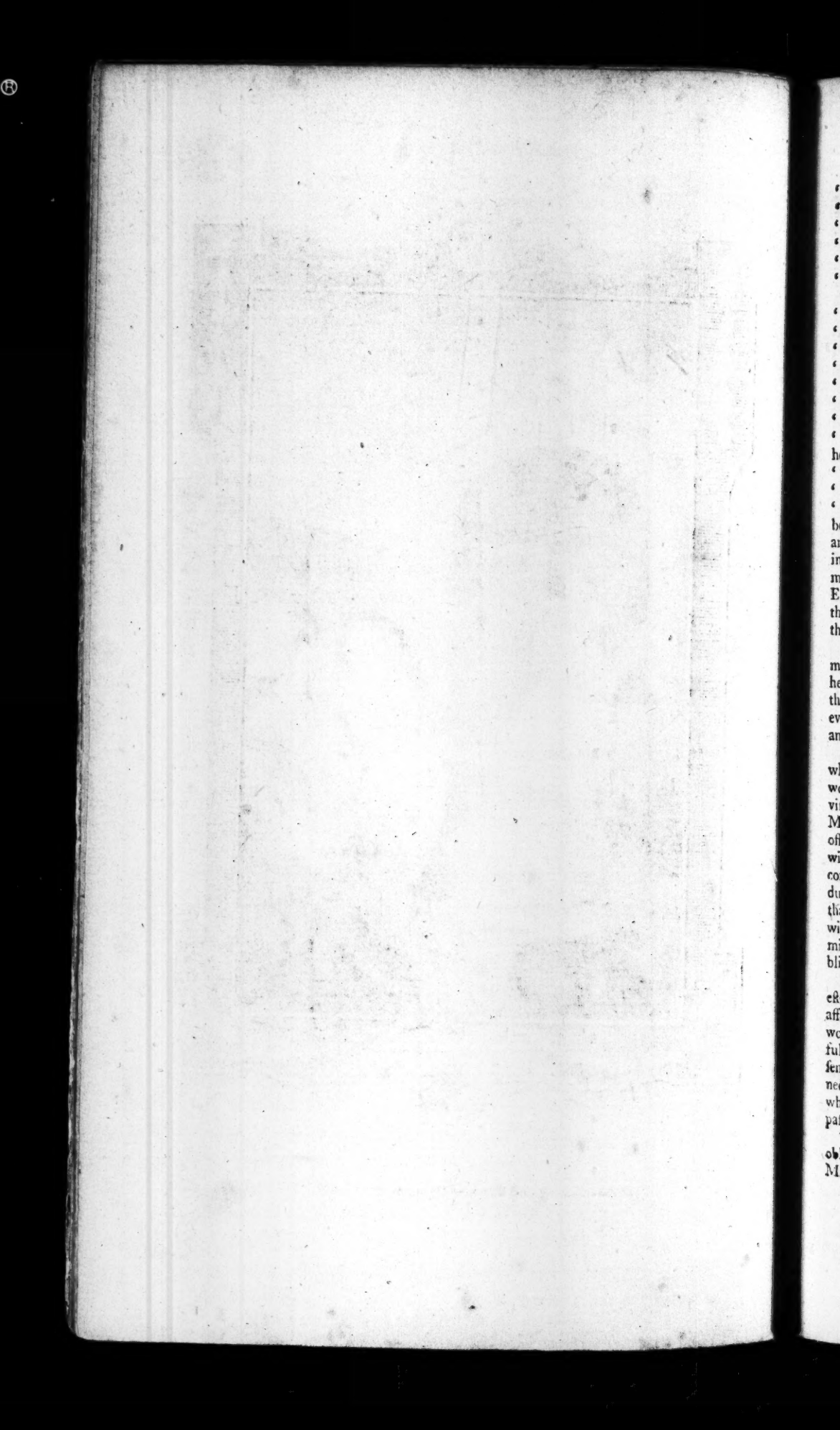
Plate II.

Published as the Act directs by Harrison & Co. Sept. 1, 1787.



'at your eagerneſs to follow this young 'woman. She ſeems to have made no 'ſlight impreſſion on your heart: there 'is danger in theſe ſort of attachments; 'how do you know how far this may 'lead you?'

'What ſtrange notions have entered 'your head!' ſaid the young nobleman; 'it is hardly worth while to make a ſeri-'ous anſwer to them: but this you may 'depend upon, that I never will follow 'my inclinations in oppoſition to the 'duty I owe my father. And now, 'what do you think will become of this 'dangerous attachment? But,' added he, ſmiling, 'we muſt make our fellow-'travellers a viſit; theſe inns are charm-'ing places for ſhortening the ceremonies 'of a firſt introduction.' He rang the bell, without waiting for his friend's anſwer; and, one of his ſervants appearing, he ordered him to preſent Mr. Freeman's and his compliments to the two Engliſh ladies, with a requeſt that they would permit them to wait upon them.

Henrietta felt her heart flutter at this meſſage; yet her natural reſerve made her wiſh Miſs Belmour would decline the viſit of theſe young gentlemen. However, that lady returned a civil anſwer, and permiſſion for them to come.

Henrietta, ſenſible of an agitation which ſhe had never known before, would have choſen not to have ſhared this viſit; but it was not poſſible to avoid it. Miſs Belmour had obliged her to throw off the character of a ſervant, and to live with her upon the footing of a friend and companion; to which Henrietta was induced to conſent, by the hope ſhe had, that this familiarity would furniſh her with opportunities to guard her unhappy miſtreſs againſt the evils into which her blind paſſion was hurrying her.

To this mark of conſideration and eſteem Miſs Belmour added a moſt affectionate behaviour, which entirely won the heart of the tender and grateful Henrietta: for nothing ſo much reſembles true friendſhip, as thoſe connections which lovers form with perſons whom they make the confidents of their paſſion.

Thus circumſtanced, Henrietta was obliged to receive the compliments of Mr. Melvil and his friend, as well as her lady; who, ſoon after, fell into a fit of muſing, that made it neceſſary for our fair heroine to keep up the converſation with the two gentlemen, which ſhe did with that ſprightlineſs and vivacity ſo natural to her.

The graces of her wit, the eaſy elegance of her manners, and the modeſt dignity of her deportment, formed new chains for the heart of Melvil. He looked on his friend with an exulting air: his eyes challenged his admiration of the woman, whoſe merit juſtified the ſentiments he entertained for her.

At parting, he told the ladies, that, ſince he was going to Paris, as well as they, he hoped they would allow him the pleaſure of eſcorting them; and that he would regulate his journey entirely by theirs.

Henrietta, who well remembered to have ſeen theſe travellers taking the very contrary route, was a little ſurpriſed at this declaration; but Miſs Belmour, abſorbed in her own reflections, was wholly ignorant of that circumſtance; and, conſidering this offer in no other light than that of general politeneſs, ſhe received it with her uſual complaiſance.

The youth and beauty of the two ladies made their apparent independent ſituation a matter of curioſity to Mr. Freeman, as well as the profound melancholy in which one of them ſeemed buried.

Melvil was little concerned in theſe enquiries: all his thoughts were taken up with the perfections he found in her who had charmed him; and he was much leſs ſolicitous to diſcover who ſhe was, than how to make himſelf agreeable to her. He found ſhe was not married, by the other lady's giving her the title of Miſs when ſhe ſpoke to her; and he was perfectly ſatisfied with this knowledge. Conſcious of the ardour with which he already loved this fair ſtranger, he was apprehenſive of awakening the fears of his friend, by dwelling too long on her praiſes; but he received the teſtimony, which Freeman could not help giving to her merit, with ſuch an undiſguiſed tranſport, as drew from him ſome ſerious admonitions, which he rallied off with a ſprightly air, and then changed the diſcourſe to a leſs intereſting ſubject.

CHAP. II.

WHICH SHEWS THAT IT IS EASIER TO BE WISE FOR OTHERS THAN OURSELVES.

THOUGH Miſs Belmour's melancholy had hindered her from taking any great ſhare in the converſation during this viſit, yet her mind was ſtill free enough to obſerve, that Henrietta had made an impreſſion upon the heart of Mr. Melvil. She congratulated her, ſmiling, upon her conqueſt; nor did her raillery even ſpare her: for Henrietta, who, for a full hour, had appeared animated with an extraordinary vivacity, became all on a ſudden penſive and ſilent. This change exactly commenced at the time Mr. Melvil went away; but ſhe did not perceive it herſelf, and ſtarted, as from a dream, when Miſs Belmour reproached her with it.

Concerned that ſhe had given room for a ſuſpicion of this nature, ſhe began, as ſoon as ſhe was alone, to examine her own heart. 'Miſs Belmour had praiſed 'the perſonal graces of Mr. Melvil, and 'it was but juſtice to own, that he was 'eminently handſome; but was ſhe weak 'enough to be dazzled with the beauty of 'a man? No, certainly; his countenance 'pleaſed her, becauſe it was a picture of 'his mind; candour, ſweetneſs, bene-'volence, ſhined in every feature: the 'politeneſs of his addreſs, his gentle 'manners, that air ſo noble, yet ſo pe-'culiarly ſoft and engaging, his good 'ſenſe, and, above all, the juſtneſs and 'purity of his ſentiments, which ſhe had 'time enough to diſcover during their 'converſation; were not theſe qualities 'which a modeſt young woman might 'eſteem? and is love a neceſſary con-'ſequence of eſteeming one of that ſex? 'Muſt ſhe deny herſelf the pleaſure of 'approving virtue and merit, for fear 'of loving it too much?' It was thus ſhe argued, and ſoon diſpelled thoſe doubts which Miſs Belmour's raillery had raiſed in her mind.

While Henrietta, under the notion of barely eſteeming what was indeed truly worthy of eſteem, was inſenſibly giving way to more tender ſentiments, Mr. Melvil, who loved with all the tenderneſs and ardour of a firſt paſſion, as his really was, burned with impatience for the hour when they were to join the fair travellers. Freeman directed his attention to Miſs Belmour, which gave the young lover an opportunity of employing his whole care and aſſiduity about his miſtreſs, who aſcribed all to his natural politeneſs, and remained in a perfect tranquillity, as well with regard to his ſentiments as her own. Miſs Belmour's experience, however, ſoon let her into the ſecret of their hearts. Melvil's paſſion was indeed apparent enough, notwithſtanding the pains he was at to conceal it, through fear of his friend's troubleſome remonſtrances; but Henrietta's, though hid from herſelf, was open to Miſs Belmour's diſcerning eyes, and ſhe exulted in the diſcovery.

This rigid cenſurer of her conduct, this inflexibly virtuous maid, was entangled in the ſnares of love. She perceived that ſhe herſelf was ignorant of her own danger, and ſhe was reſolved not to draw her out of this falſe ſecurity by any unſeaſonable railleries: for, however uſeful the ſtrict principles of Henrietta had been to her, yet ſhe could not bear the ſuperiority they gave her; and ſhe rejoiced in the hope, that a paſſion, perhaps as unfortunately placed as her own, would reduce her to an equality with her.

Their journey now drew near a period: Melvil trembled at the thoughts of parting; he had indeed laid the foundation of an intimacy with the two ladies, which would give him a right to viſit them in Paris; but he had been uſed to ſee the object of his paſſion continually, from the firſt moment of his acquaintance with her: and although they never ſeparated till the evening, yet he thought the time amazingly long till they met again. How then would he be able to ſupport an abſence of two or three days, which decorum would oblige him to make the interval of his viſits? beſides, ſhe was ſtill ignorant of the ſentiments ſhe had inſpired him with. Hitherto he had never found an opportunity of ſpeaking to her alone; but, if one ſhould offer, how could he declare himſelf to a woman, for whom he felt as much reſpect as love? yet one, whoſe birth he was ignorant of, who ſeemed to be in a dependent ſituation, whom he could not think of marrying, and whom he durſt not wiſh to ſeduce.

The difficulties he could not remove he endeavoured to baniſh from his thoughts; and, without conſidering what muſt

must be the event of the passion he was thus indulging, he for the present confined all his wishes to the pleasure of seeing her.

Miss Belmour had often wondered that this young lover shewed so little solicitude to make opportunities of speaking to his mistress in private. She could not impute this behaviour to want of ardour; every look he gave her was expressive of the tenderness his soul was filled with: it was then respect, it was awe, it was fear of offending, that laid him under this restraint. How glorious this for Henrietta! how humiliating for her, who had scarce escaped falling a sacrifice to the dishonourable attempts of her lover! Was she then less capable of inspiring a respectful passion than her woman? or did her charms act more powerfully on the heart she had subdued, than those of Henrietta? This question her self-love easily decided; and, from the same sentiment, she was persuaded that Henrietta, with all her boasted virtue, would defend herself as weakly against the lover her inclinations declared for, as she had done. Her present triumph, she thought, was less owing to her own strength than her lover's weakness, who had not yet made a formal attack upon her heart: curiosity to know what effect the declaration of his passion would have, made her resolve to give him an opportunity of speaking to her in private. They were now within a day's journey of Paris. On their arrival at the house where they were to dine, Mr. Freeman, as usual, went to give orders for their entertainment, and left Melvil with the two ladies. Miss Belmour, pretending that she had a mind for some particular dish, ran after him, and kept him in conversation, that he might not interrupt the lovers, who being now for the first time alone together, were both equally embarrassed.

Henrietta cast down her eyes, surprized at the confusion in which she found herself, and shocked at the intelligence this new emotion gave her of the true state of her heart. Mr. Melvil approached her trembling; he could not resolve to lose so favourable an opportunity of declaring his sentiments to her: but the natural goodness and rectitude of his mind suggesting to him, that it was a kind of fraud to seek encouragement of a passion, the design of which he was not himself able to answer for, he remained a few moments in suspence.

This silence increased Henrietta's embarrassment; but suddenly reflecting upon the advantage it gave Mr. Melvil over her, she turned her eyes towards him, with a look, in which she endeavoured to throw as much indifference as possible, but which, nevertheless, had an unusual coldness in it; so that Melvil, partly witheld by his extreme delicacy, and partly by the awe which this severe glance inspired him with, dropped, for that time, all thoughts of declaring his passion, and immediately entered into an indifferent conversation.

Henrietta seemed as if relieved from a painful load; her countenance resumed it's former sweetness, and she talked to him with her usual vivacity: yet Miss Belmour, at her return, saw some remains of her late uneasiness in her eyes; she observed, too, that she spoke less to Mr. Melvil, and more to his friend, than she did before; that she studiously avoided the looks of the former; and that her behaviour to him was less free and obliging than it used to be. All this she looked upon as the play of coquetry; and in Mr. Melvil's apparent melancholy she saw it's purpose and effect.

But Henrietta, taught by what passed in her own heart during the few moments she was alone with Mr. Melvil, that she not only considered him as a lover, but a lover formidable by his engaging qualities, resolved not to strengthen her prepossession in his favour, by continuing to see and converse with him. Lord B——'s behaviour had given her no high idea of the disinterestedness of men. She trembled at her own imprudence, in so far forgetting the humble station that Providence had placed her in, as to entertain sentiments of tenderness for a man, who, from the inequality there was between them, might think himself authorised to form expectations injurious to her honour: though her weakness was so lately known to herself, yet she fancied it had been perceived by others before, and that even Mr. Melvil had discovered the preference with which she regarded him. It was this thought which made her so suddenly alter her behaviour; but as indifference is, of all dispositions of the mind, the hardest to feign, Melvil imputed the apparent constraint in her manner to some disgust he

had unhappily given her, and Miſs Belmour to the artifice of a coquet.

Henrietta, who was far from imagining ſhe over-acted her part, continued, during the whole time they were at dinner, to avoid her lover's looks, ſo carefully, that he had no opportunity to make her comprehend by them, how much he was concerned at her extraordinary coldneſs. However, ſhe could not, without affectation, refuſe him her hand when they left the inn; but they followed Mr. Freeman and Miſs Belmour ſo cloſe, that it was not poſſible for him to ſpeak to her without being overheard; and he in vain ſought her eyes: they were always directed another way. He ſighed when he helped her into the chaiſe; and if ſhe had not turned her face from him that moment, the bluſh with which it was overſpread, would have ſhewn him that ſhe took but too much notice of that ſigh.

'You are melancholy, Henrietta,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, after looking at her in ſilence for a long time, attentive to the motions of her mind, which might be eaſily read in her countenance.

'Am I, Madam?' replied ſhe, with a ſigh half ſuppreſſed, and a gentle ſmile.

'Yes, indeed, are you,' reſumed Miſs Belmour, mimicking the languid accent in which ſhe ſpoke; 'and I don't remember that I ever ſaw you ſo before.'

'And yet I have many cauſes for melancholy, Madam,' replied Henrietta, whoſe heart was full, and ſhe eagerly graſped at this opportunity to relieve herſelf by tears; tears, which ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe gave to the remembrance of her misfortunes, without aſking herſelf, why that remembrance was more poignant now than before.

'Ah! Henrietta,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, ſhaking her head, 'your heart has undergone a great change within theſe few days. You are in love, my dear.'—'Is it poſſible, Madam,' cried Henrietta, haſtily, her fair face all crimſoned over, 'that you have diſcovered?—— Do you think that—— Then, to be ſure, Mr. Melvil——' She ſtopped abruptly, and caſt down her eyes: the mention of that name ſeemed to lead her to a conſciouſneſs, that ſhe had betrayed herſelf.

Miſs Belmour was affected with her beautiful ſimplicity. 'Don't be aſhamed, my dear Henrietta,' ſaid ſhe, taking her hand, 'to ſpeak freely to me. From me,' added ſhe, ſighing, 'you may be ſure of indulgence.'

'No, Madam, no,' interrupted Henrietta, with great earneſtneſs, 'I would not ſeek indulgence for my weakneſſes; but I conjure you, Madam,' purſued ſhe, with tears that, in ſpite of her endeavours, would force their way, 'ſuffer me to return to that humble ſtation, from which your partial kindneſs raiſed me. You have made me forget I was a ſervant. It does not become me to view with ſenſibility the merit of perſons ſo greatly above me. But you ſhall find, Madam, that I will repair this error, and that my conduct ſhall be ſuch as may render me not unworthy your eſteem.'

Notwithſtanding the delicate turn which Henrietta gave to a declaration, which ſhewed ſhe was determined early to conquer her paſſion, yet Miſs Belmour conſidered it as a triumph over her, who had not been capable of acting with equal prudence.

'It is happy for you,' ſaid ſhe, coldly, 'that you need no aſſiſtance to help you to keep your paſſions in ſubjection; but I owe you too many obligations for the good counſel you have given me, to permit you to appear in any other character than that of my friend.'

Henrietta's mind was in ſo much agitation, that ſhe did not take in the full ſenſe of this anſwer; but, ſtruck with the obliging purport of the laſt words of it, ſhe expreſſed her gratitude in terms full of tenderneſs and reſpect.

The ſight of Paris drew them both out of a long ſilence, which had ſucceeded a converſation with which neither had been pleaſed: Henrietta, becauſe it had diſcovered ſo much weakneſs on her ſide; Miſs Belmour, becauſe it had ſhewn ſo little.

Their chaiſe, as Miſs Belmour had directed, ſtopped at the houſe of her banker in Paris. The two gentlemen were already at the ſide it. Mr. Melvil, as if he was afraid Henrietta would refuſe him her hand, ſeized it with trembling haſte; and, as he led her into the houſe, ventured to preſs it with his lips, unperceived by any one elſe. Henrietta, imputing this boldneſs to the diſcovery he had made of her ſentiments, pulled her hand away haſtily, giving him a look at the ſame time that expreſſed her reſentment; but all her anger could not prevent

prevent her from being affected with the ſoft languor that appeared in his face, and the ſubmiſſive manner in which he had yielded to the effort ſhe made to withdraw her hand.

Miſs Belmour, at parting, told them, ſhe hoped to ſee them again in a day or two, when ſhe ſhould be ſettled. Her Pariſian friend ſoon procured her convenient lodgings; and, at her deſire, recommended to her a Femme de Chambre, among the other ſervants he provided her; which Henrietta in vain oppoſed; but, fixed in her deſign to avoid Mr. Melvil, ſhe took care to be ſeldom in the way when he came.

Miſs Belmour blamed her for this conduct. 'You will make the man 'think you love him, and are afraid of 'him,' ſaid ſhe, 'by flying him.'

'If I loved him, Madam,' replied Henrietta, bluſhing, 'is it not prudence 'to avoid him?'

'Why, I don't know,' ſaid Miſs Belmour; 'Mr. Melvil certainly loves 'you; and, whatever inequality there 'may be in your conditions, yet love is 'a great leveller: he may poſſibly intend 'to marry you.'

'It is not fit I ſhould ſuppoſe he has 'any ſuch deſign, Madam,' reſumed Henrietta, 'ſince it is highly impro-'bable; and I will not expoſe myſelf 'to the danger of being deceived. I 'have ſomewhere read,' added ſhe, ſmiling, 'that in love flight is victory; 'and this way at leaſt I ſhall be ſure to 'conquer.'

Miſs Belmour, who knew how difficult it was to be in love and be wiſe, laughed at a reſolution, which ſhe did not think it would be always in her power to maintain. Poor Henrietta, who had ſo artleſsly laid open her heart, was often expoſed to the moſt poignant raillery from her; but at length ſhe was delivered from this kind of perſecution by a ſurpriſing alteration in Miſs Belmour herſelf.

This young lady, who had fled from her lover, rather with a hope of ſtimulating his paſſion than of ſubduing her own, though ſhe endeavoured to impoſe upon herſelf in believing the latter to be the true motive of her conduct, fell into a moſt violent deſpair, when ſhe found that, far from following her, he did not even ſeek a reconciliation by writing to her. Sick of herſelf, the world, and tired of her exiſtence, ſhe miſtook the agitations of a heart tortured by jealouſy, diſappointment, and the pangs of ſlighted love, for the motions of grace, and the genuine marks of repentance. She neglected her dreſs, took no pleaſure in any amuſement, avoided company, and ſpent whole hours in her cloſet, where ſhe wept and prayed by turns.

She told Henrietta, that the world and all it's pleaſures were grown inſipid to her; that her whole ſoul was filled with divine love; and that the thoughts and exerciſes of religion made up all her happineſs. She then paſſionately regretted that there were no religious communities among the Proteſtants, where a mind that was weaned from this ſublunary world, and all it's vanities, might freely indulge it's pious contemplations, and devote itſelf entirely to Heaven. 'Oh, 'how happy are the nuns!' ſhe exclaimed; 'how I envy them! Sure no-'thing can be more delightful, when 'perſons are truly pious, than to live 'in a religious ſociety excluded from all 'commerce with a world they muſt 'certainly deſpiſe. I think I ſhould 'be perfectly contented if I was in a 'cloiſter.'

Henrietta congratulated her upon her new ſentiments, but endeavoured to prove that there was more merit in paſſing through life with innocence, and in rightly performing all it's duties, than in flying to the gloomy ſolitude of a cloiſter, where virtue is ſecured by bolts and bars, and the exerciſes of religion performed as a penance. She recommended to her the ſtudy of the Scriptures, and put ſome practical treatiſes of religion, written by the beſt authors, into her hands: but the zeal of this new convert was ſo flaming, that nothing would ſerve her but a total retirement from the world; and ſhe made ſuch frequent viſits to a convent, where a friend of hers had lately taken the veil, that Henrietta was apprehenſive the nuns would diſcover the true ſtate of her mind, and take advantage of her paſſions to pervert her principles, and ſecure her to themſelves.

While theſe whims poſſeſſed her, ſhe was ſo inacceſſible to all viſiters, that Mr. Melvil could with difficulty get admittance. Freeman ſaw the progreſs of his paſſion with great uneaſineſs; and, finding that he could not be prevailed upon to leave Paris, reſolved to write to his father, and give him a hint of the dangerous

gerous attachment his ſon had formed, that he might ſend him a peremptory command to return to England: but, before he could execute this deſign, Melvil, to his great ſurprize, told him, that he would leave Paris in two days. The poor youth expected his friend would have expreſſed ſome joy at this news; and being diſappointed at his receiving with indifference what had coſt him ſo many pangs to reſolve upon—

'You make me no compliments,' ſaid he, with a tender ſmile, 'upon the 'conqueſt I have gained over my incli-'nations: do you think I can baniſh 'myſelf from Miſs Benſon without con-'cern?'

'I am ſure I cannot hear you ſpeak 'in this manner without concern,' replied Freeman. 'Is it fit for a young 'man of your rank to entertain a ſeri-'ous liking for a woman, to whoſe 'birth and character you are an abſolute 'ſtranger?'

'There is not a man in the world,' reſumed Melvil, eagerly, 'who need to 'bluſh for loving Miſs Benſon: her per-'ſon, beautiful as it is, is the leaſt of 'her charms; that mingled ſweetneſs 'and dignity in her manners, that grace-'ful modeſty which diſtinguiſhes every 'word and action of hers, exalts her 'above all the women I have ever ſeen. 'You have heard her talk, and you could 'not help owning that you thought her 'very ſenſible.'

'Well, but what is all this to the 'purpoſe?' interrupted Freeman; 'what 'ſignifies attributing ſuch goddeſs-like 'perfections to an obſcure girl, whom, 'if you were at liberty to diſpoſe of 'yourſelf, you would not, I ſuppoſe, 'be ſo mad as to marry? Your fortune 'enables you to make other propoſals, 'leſs unworthy of yourſelf, though ad-'vantageous enough for a young wo-'man in her dependent ſituation. Own 'freely, then, that this is your intention.'

'May I periſh,' replied Melvil, with ſome emotion, 'if I would degrade ſuch 'excellence to a miſtreſs; but, if I were 'capable of ſuch a deſign, her virtue, 'I am ſure, is incorruptible. Have you 'not obſerved with what care ſhe ſhuns 'me? She knows I love her; but ſhe 'knows not with what purity I love her; 'and, conſcious of her ſituation, ſhe is 'afraid I ſhould take advantage of it to 'declare myſelf in a manner that would 'wound her delicacy.—Charming crea-'ture! I love her! I adore her!—In-'deed, my dear Freeman, it is time to 'be gone.'

'I ſee it plainly,' replied Freeman; 'you are grown quite romantick. We 'will ſet out to-morrow, if you pleaſe; 'for, with the ſtrange notions you have 'entertained, I think you ought not 'to truſt yourſelf here any longer.'

The lover conſented with a ſigh; but, at the ſame time, put his friend in mind, that civility obliged them to go and take leave of the ladies. Freeman could not reaſonably oppoſe his making this viſit; and, after he had given proper directions to the ſervants for their journey the next day, he accompanied him to Miſs Belmour's lodgings.

CHAP. III.

IN WHICH MISS BELMOUR ACTS THE PART OF A TRUE FEMALE FRIEND.

THEY found the two ladies together. Henrietta could not, without affectation, avoid her lover that day, as ſhe was in the room when he came in; and he, who had not been ſo fortunate for ſeveral days before, found ſo much delight in looking at her and hearing her ſpeak, that he forgot he came to pay a farewel viſit; which Mr. Freeman obſerving, took care to mention their deſign of leaving Paris the next day.

Melvil's gaiety was immediately overcaſt, Henrietta turned pale, Freeman was attentive to his friend's emotions, and only Miſs Belmour had freedom of mind enough left to ſpeak. She ſaid ſome civil things upon the occaſion, which Freeman anſwered; for Melvil continued ſilent, with his eyes fixed upon Henrietta, who had bent hers towards the ground: conſcious of the emotion with which ſhe had heard the news of their intended departure, ſhe durſt not look up, leſt the perſon, from whom ſhe was moſt ſolicitous to hide her concern, ſhould read it too plainly in her countenance.

Recovering herſelf at length, upon Miſs Belmour's taking occaſion to thank them anew for the civilities ſhe had received from them during their journey from Calais, ſhe added a few words to her compliment; but, in doing ſo, her eyes ſlightly glanced over Mr. Melvil, and

and directed their looks full upon his friend.

The converſation was dull enough during two hours that they ſtayed; and Freeman, perceiving the young gentleman wanted reſolution to put an end to the viſit, roſe up firſt: Mr. Melvil roſe likewiſe, though with apparent reluctance; and having ſaluted Miſs Belmour, approached Henrietta, trembling. She turned pale and red ſucceſſively; a ſoft ſigh ſtole from her. Melvil was in too much emotion to obſerve hers: he ſaluted her with an air of ſolemn reſpect; but, as ſhe retired a ſtep back, a ſudden impulſe, which he could not reſiſt, made him take her hand; he preſſed it to his lips with paſſionate tenderneſs, and, ſighing, quitted the room with the utmoſt precipitation.

Henrietta's eyes overflowed; ſhe made haſte to wipe them before Miſs Belmour, who attended the gentlemen as far as the door of her anti-chamber, returned.

'Ah! my poor Henrietta,' ſaid that young lady, who perceived ſhe had been weeping, 'I pity you! What ſordid 'wretches are theſe men! Melvil loves 'you, and yet he is able to leave you; 'nay, I am perſuaded he has diſcovered 'your tenderneſs for him. What monſtrous ingratitude! You ought to hate 'him, my dear.'

'You bid me hate him, Madam,' replied Henrietta, ſmiling, 'yet ſay every 'thing that can confirm me in a favourable opinion of him. If he loves 'me, and has ſeen any weakneſs in me, 'he gives the beſt proof of his love in 'not ſeeking to take advantage of that 'weakneſs.'

Miſs Belmour, who thought this a ſtrange way of reaſoning, anſwered no otherwiſe than by a ſignificant ſmile, which ſeemed to ſay, ſhe was reſolved to juſtify him at any rate; while Henrietta, finding in her lover's behaviour a delicacy which agreeably flattered her eſteem of him, cheriſhed his remembrance with a tender grief, and, perhaps, for the firſt time, repined at her unhappy fortune, which had placed ſuch a diſtance between them.

As ſoon as the two gentlemen had left the ladies lodgings, Melvil, who found himſelf very low-ſpirited, propoſed to his friend to ſpend the evening at a noted Hotel, with ſome young Engliſhmen of faſhion, who were newly arrived. Freeman conſented; but obſerved with uneaſineſs, that his pupil, who till then had been remarkably abſtemious, puſhed about the bottle with great velocity, and could not be perſuaded to go home till the night was far advanced.

Mr. Freeman ſaw him in bed, and then retired to his own chamber, full of apprehenſions leſt this ſudden intemperance ſhould have any bad effect on his health. As ſoon as it was light, he went to his bed-ſide, and found him with all the ſymptoms of a feveriſh diſorder upon him, to which the agitations of his mind had contributed more, perhaps, than the liquor of which he had drank ſo freely.

All thoughts of their journey were now laid aſide; phyſicians were ſent for, who pronounced that he was dangerouſly ill: Freeman, full of anxiety, ſat cloſe to his bed, holding one of his burning hands tenderly preſſed between his. He heard him ſigh frequently; and from thence took occaſion to aſk him, if any ſecret uneaſineſs occaſioned his indiſpoſition?

The young gentleman attributed his illneſs entirely to the exceſs he had been guilty of the night before; but his fever increaſing, he grew delirious, and then the name of Miſs Benſon was continually in his mouth.

Freeman, judging by theſe ravings of the deep impreſſion this young woman had made on the heart of his pupil, blamed himſelf for ſo obſtinately oppoſing his paſſion; and, judging from Henrietta's ſituation that ſhe would not refuſe to liſten to ſuch propoſals as his fortune enabled him to make her, he reſolved to attempt ſomething in his friend's favour.

His curioſity having led him to make ſome enquiries concerning Miſs Belmour of ſeveral perſons that had lately arrived from England, he found ſhe had but a doubtful character; her connections with Mr. Morley having expoſed her to great cenſure. Of her companion he could learn nothing; but, concluding from the friendſhip there appeared to be between them, that ſhe was her confident in this amour, he flattered himſelf that ſhe would not be a very difficult conqueſt.

He ſhut his eyes upon all that was wrong in this proceeding; and, conſidering nothing but the intereſt of his friend, for whom he had the moſt paſſionate concern, he thought it leſs dangerous to give him a miſtreſs, than to truſt him to the fantaſtick power of his paſſion, which might

might hurry him on to a clandeſtine marriage.

The young gentleman was in a few days entirely out of danger from the fever; but his ſighs, and the penſive air of his countenance, ſhewed that his mind was not at eaſe.

'If you were able to go abroad,' ſaid Freeman to him, 'we would viſit our 'Engliſh ladies once more before we 'leave Paris. They imagine we are in 'London by this time, and will be 'ſtrangely ſurprized to ſee us again.'

'Then they do not know I have been 'ill,' replied Mr. Melvil.

'Not yet,' ſaid Freeman; 'but if you 'wiſh they ſhould know, I will wait on 'them this afternoon, and tell them 'what has kept us in Paris ſo much lon-'ger than we intended.'

Melvil affected to receive this propoſal with indifference; but his friend obſerved that he was more chearful than before, and doubted not but he expected the news of his illneſs would have ſome effect on Henrietta.

He went at the uſual hour, and was immediately admitted. 'You are in Paris 'ſtill, then?' exclaimed Miſs Belmour, in a joyful accent, as ſoon as Freeman entered her apartment. 'I am exceſſively 'glad of it; I hope your agreeable friend 'is with you.'

Freeman, a little diſappointed at not ſeeing Henrietta with her, anſwered coldly, that Mr. Melvil had been indiſpoſed, which obliged them to delay their journey.

'I fancy,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, with an arch leer, 'that the air of Paris is 'mighty neceſſary for your friend at this 'time; you are in the wrong to hurry 'him away.'

'You have a great deal of penetra-'tion, Madam,' replied Mr. Freeman, ſmiling; 'you have gueſſed the cauſe of 'his illneſs, I believe.'

'I believe I have,' reſumed Miſs Belmour; 'and perhaps I could tell him 'ſomething that might contribute to for-'ward his recovery.'

Freeman began now to think his ſcheme was in a hopeful way. 'To be 'ſincere with you, Madam,' ſaid he, with a graver look and accent, 'Mr. 'Melvil is deſperately in love with Miſs 'Benſon.'

'Poor man!' cried Miſs Belmour, laughing, 'he is to be pitied truly, for 'Miſs Benſon is moſt deſperately in love 'with him likewiſe.'

'How happy would this news make 'him!' exclaimed Freeman. 'Am I, 'Madam, at liberty to tell him?'

'Certainly,' replied Miſs Belmour; 'I told you for that purpoſe; and now 'what do you think of my frankneſs?'

'I adore you for it, Madam,' ſaid Freeman, taking her hand, which (encouraged by her behaviour) he kiſſed with great liberty. 'Ah!' purſued he, looking at her tenderly, 'what addi-'tional charms does kindneſs give to 'beauty!'

'I hear Miſs Benſon on the ſtairs,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, withdrawing her hand; 'I will give you an opportunity 'to plead your friend's cauſe: remember 'what I have told you, and don't be 'diſcouraged by a little affectation.'

She ſtopped upon Henrietta's entrance, who ſtarted at the ſight of Mr. Freeman, and immediately after her fair face was covered with bluſhes.

'You ſee we have not loſt our good 'friends yet,' ſaid Miſs Belmour. Henrietta only ſmiled. 'I muſt deſire you, 'my dear,' purſued that young lady, 'to entertain Mr. Freeman; I ordered 'ſome trades-people to attend me about 'this time.'

She hurried out of the room when ſhe had ſaid this, not without ſome confuſion for the part ſhe had acted; to account for which, it is neceſſary the reader ſhould know that the mind of this young lady had undergone another revolution, within the few days of Mr. Melvil's illneſs.

A letter from her lover, filled with tender complaints, and new aſſurances of everlaſting fidelity, had baniſhed all thoughts of devotion and a convent. She had anſwered it immediately, without communicating it to Henrietta; her tranſport at finding herſelf ſtill beloved, and the fear of diſguſting him by any new coldneſs, hurried her on to the moſt fatal reſolutions. She invited him to come to Paris to her; and, not doubting but he would inſtantly obey her ſummons, ſhe was now only ſolicitous how to reconcile Henrietta to her conduct, and oblige her to keep her ſecret.

The unexpected news of Mr. Melvil's being ſtill in Paris, and Mr. Freeman's acknowledgment of his friend's paſſion for Henrietta, anſwered all her views.

She

She imputed the reſerve Henrietta had been enabled to maintain, leſs to her own virtue than to the unenterprizing temper of her lover; and was perſuaded that the diſcovery ſhe had made of her tenderneſs for him, would put the affair upon ſuch a footing, as to make her leſs rigid in her remonſtrances with reſpect to Mr. Morley.

CHAP. IV.

WHICH CONTAINS A VERY INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

FREEMAN, though perſuaded that Miſs Belmour was a woman of intrigue, and by conſequence entertaining no elevated idea of her companion, found himſelf ſo awed by the modeſty that ſhone in her countenance, and the dignity of her perſon and manner, that he was at ſome loſs how to introduce the ſubject which had brought him thither. Henrietta, however, innocently led him to it, by expreſſing her ſurprize to ſee him ſtill in Paris.

'You ſay nothing of my friend, Ma-
'dam,' ſaid Freeman; 'and this indif-
'ference with regard to him is a very
'bad omen.'

'I hope Mr. Melvil is well,' ſaid Henrietta, gravely, without ſeeming to take any notice of the ſtrange ſpeech he had made.

'He is better than he was three or four
'days ago,' replied Freeman, 'when
'his phyſicians deſpaired of his life.'

'Bleſs me!' cried Henrietta, with an emotion ſhe could not ſuppreſs, 'has
'Mr. Melvil been ſo ill then? I am ex-
'tremely concerned to hear it.'

'You would, no doubt,' ſaid Freeman, 'be more concerned if you knew
'you were the cauſe.'

'This kind of raillery, Mr. Free-
'man,' replied Henrietta, a little confuſed, 'is not at all agreeable to me, I
'aſſure you.'

'By Heaven I am ſerious,' reſumed Freeman; 'my friend loves you with
'the utmoſt ardour: I am a witneſs to
'the birth and progreſs of his paſſion,
'and to his fruitleſs endeavours to con-
'quer it. The effort he made to leave
'Paris has almoſt coſt him his life; he
'was taken ill the evening before our in-
'tended departure. Oh, Miſs Benſon!
'had you heard with what tenderneſs he
'called upon your name, when the vio-
'lence of his fever had deprived him of
'his ſenſes, I am ſure you muſt have
'pitied him.'

Freeman perceived, by the changes in Henrietta's countenance, that ſhe did not hear him without emotion. He pauſed, in expectation of ſome pretty affected anſwer, that would give hope while it ſeemed to deſtroy it; but Henrietta, with a compoſed look and accent, replied—

'If I am to believe this account of
'your friend's illneſs not exaggerated,
'permit me to aſk you, Sir, what is
'your deſign by making me acquainted
'with his ſentiments, and what you ex-
'pect from me upon this occaſion?'

Freeman was a little diſconcerted by this ſpeech, and at the manner in which ſhe delivered it; but, relying on the intelligence he had received from Miſs Belmour—

'I expect you will have compaſſion
'on my friend,' ſaid he, 'and give him
'an opportunity to declare to you him-
'ſelf the paſſion you have inſpired him
'with.'

'I will be very free with you, Mr.
'Freeman,' replied Henrietta; 'your
'ready concurrence with your friend in
'the liking you ſay he has entertained
'for me, is not conſiſtent with your good
'ſenſe and prudence. Mr. Melvil is a
'young man of rank and fortune; I am
'poor and dependent; my birth, perhaps,
'greatly inferior to his. Will his pa-
'rents, think you, approve of ſuch a
'choice?'

'What have parents to do with a ten-
'der engagement?' interrupted Free-
man; 'an engagement in which the
'heart only is conſulted.'

'Were my heart ever ſo well diſpoſed
'in favour of your friend,' reſumed Henrietta, not willing to underſtand him,
'I would not receive his addreſſes with-
'out the ſanction of his parents con-
'ſent.'

Freeman could hardly help ſmiling at this formal declaration; and, ſuppoſing that the beſt way to drive theſe ſtrange notions out of her head, was to acquaint her with Melvil's quality, which he likewiſe expected would have no ſmall influence over her—

'It is not fit,' ſaid he, 'that you
'ſhould be any longer ignorant of the
'rank of him whom your charms have
'ſubjected. Melvil is not the name of

'my friend; he is the heir of an illuſtri-
'ous title and a great eſtate: he loves
'you, he will make your fortune; do
'not throw away this opportunity of
'freeing yourſelf from poverty and de-
'pendance, nor let a romantick notion
'of virtue deprive you of the advan-
'tages that are offered you.'

'Hold, Sir,' interrupted Henrietta, riſing from her chair, 'this inſult is too
'plain; I ought not to have liſtened to
'you ſo long.' She ſpoke this with tolerable compoſure; but, finding her tears begin to flow, ſhe turned aſide to conceal them, and haſtily wiping her eyes, ſhe looked on him again with a kind of calm diſdain.

'I know not,' ſaid ſhe, 'what weak-
'neſs you have diſcovered in my beha-
'viour, to encourage you to make me
'ſuch ſhocking propoſals; but I may
'venture to tell you, though I am not
'the miſtreſs of this apartment, that the
'doors of it ſhall never be open to you
'again.'

She was hurrying out of the room when ſhe had ſpoke this, leaving Freeman in ſo much confuſion, that he knew not what to ſay to her, when Miſs Belmour entered with a letter in her hand.

'Do you know a gentleman of the
'name of Damer,' ſaid ſhe to Henrietta,
'who is at preſent at Montpelier?'

'I do, Madam,' replied ſhe, looking eagerly at the letter.

'Then this letter is for you, I ſup-
'poſe,' ſaid Miſs Belmour; 'it was
'incloſed in another to me, and directed
'to my banker's: but is your name
'Courteney? you ſee the ſuperſcription
'is for Miſs Courteney.'

'The letter is certainly for me, Ma-
'dam,' ſaid Henrietta, bluſhing.

'Oh! then,' replied Miſs Belmour, ſmiling, and giving it to her, 'I have
'diſcovered a ſecret, I find.'

Henrietta retired immediately; and Miſs Belmour approached Mr. Freeman, who ſtood leaning over his chair, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

'What is the matter with you?' ſaid ſhe; 'you look exceſſively pale.'

'Where is Miſs Benſon, Madam?' ſaid he, ſtarting out of his reverie at the ſound of her voice.

'She is in her own chamber, I be-
'lieve,' replied Miſs Belmour; 'but
'did you take notice of what paſſed
'about the letter? I delivered it to her
'before you on purpoſe: you ſee ſhe in
'a manner owned that Courteney is her
'true name; is not this ſtrange?'

'I muſt beg leave to ſpeak to her
'again,' ſaid he, interrupting her, and making towards the door; 'which way,
'pray, Madam?'

Miſs Belmour followed him, ſurprized at the agitation he appeared to be in; and pointing to a room juſt oppoſite, 'you will find her there,' ſaid ſhe.

Freeman opened the door without any ceremony. Henrietta, who was reading her letter, looked up at the noiſe he made in entering: 'This is extremely rude,
'Sir,' ſaid ſhe; 'I deſire you will in-
'ſtantly be gone, and trouble me no
'more.' But, apprehenſive that he would not quit her ſo eaſily, ſhe ruſhed by him, and was running to the room in which ſhe had left Miſs Belmour: he took hold of her hand, to prevent her leaving him; and ſhe was upon the point of expreſſing her reſentment at the inſolence of this treatment, in harſher terms than any ſhe had yet uſed, when ſhe ſaw tears guſh in great abundance from his eyes. Moved at this ſight, ſhe ſtood ſtill, but endeavoured to diſengage her hand, looking at him earneſtly, and in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment.

'O my ſiſter!' cried he at laſt, burſting into a freſh flood of tears; 'my dear,
'dear ſiſter!'—He was not able to utter a word more, but led her gently back to her chamber, which ſhe permitted, trembling, confuſed, and full of anxious expectation.

'How ſtrangely you look upon me!' ſaid he; 'do you doubt whether I am
'your brother?'

'I know not what to think,' replied ſhe, ſhrinking from his embrace; for he had folded his arms about her.

'Dear girl!' cried he, 'how amiable
'is this ſweet reſerve, theſe modeſt
'doubts—but it is certain I am your
'brother, my Henrietta: is it poſſible
'your memory retains no traces of my
'features? in yours, methinks, I ſee a
'lively reſemblance of my dear mother.
'How dull was I that I did not diſcover
'it before! but how could I expect to
'meet you in France, in ſuch a ſituation,
'and under a diſguiſed name! Oh! my
'dear ſiſter, theſe circumſtances diſtract
'me—Good Heaven! what a part have
'I acted—I perceive you are ſtill per-
'plexed,' purſued he, after a little pauſe; and, taking a miniature picture out of his pocket, 'You will certainly be able

'to

'to recollect your mother's picture,' ſaid he, 'which ſhe gave me at parting.'

Henrietta looked at the picture, kiſſed it, and then threw herſelf in tears upon her brother's neck. 'Forgive my doubts,' ſaid ſhe, 'it is many years ſince I have 'ſeen you; we were children when we 'parted, but now I am convinced you 'are my brother: my heart tells me ſo 'without this dear teſtimony,' purſued ſhe, kiſſing again the picture of her mother, which ſhe ſtill held; then ſuddenly claſping her hands together, and lifting up her fine eyes, which were ſwimming in tears—'I thank thee, O my God!' ſaid ſhe, 'for reſtoring to me my bro'ther:' and, turning again to him with an affectionate look, 'A few moments 'ago,' ſaid ſhe, 'I thought myſelf very 'unhappy, but now you will be a friend 'and protector to me.'

He tenderly kiſſed her cheek—'What 'a wretch have I been!' ſaid he, ſighing.—'Indeed, my dear ſiſter, I never 'ſhall forgive myſelf for having ignorantly practiſed on your virtue.'

'Oh! that my brother,' replied Henrietta, 'would be taught by this acci'dent, never more to form deſigns 'againſt innocence; and, in caſes like 'mine, to conſider every virtuous young 'woman as a ſiſter.'

Mr. Courteney, for ſo we ſhall now call him, was extremely moved at theſe words. He gazed at her ſome moments with mingled tenderneſs and delight; but all on a ſudden, as if ſtruck with ſome painful reflection—

'Henrietta,' ſaid he, with a look and accent greatly altered from his former ſweetneſs, 'why came you to France? 'and how has it happened that you are 'intimately connected with this woman, 'this Miſs Belmour?'

'Why, do you know any harm of 'Miſs Belmour?' ſaid Henrietta, frighted at his ſternneſs.

'You don't anſwer my queſtion,' replied he, peeviſhly.

'Alas! my dear brother,' ſaid Henrietta, 'I have a long and melancholy 'ſtory to tell you: I have been reduced 'to great diſtreſs; my aunt, with whom 'you ſuppoſed me ſo happily ſettled, has 'treated me unkindly: I muſt confeſs, 'indeed, I have not been wholly free 'from blame; but you ſhall know all 'ſome other time. As for Miſs Belmour, I was recommended to her—— 'I would not ſhock you, brother; but 'I have been obliged to go to ſervice; 'and I was recommended to Miſs Belmour by two ladies of quality, her near 'relations.'

Mr. Courteney ſighed deeply at this account, and remained for ſeveral moments ſilent; at length recovering himſelf—

'Miſs Belmour, it ſeems,' ſaid he, 'did not always know your real name. 'You appear to be on the footing of a 'companion.'

'Miſs Belmour was pleaſed to take 'a liking to me,' ſaid Henrietta; 'and, 'though ignorant of my birth, would 'not ſuffer me to continue with her in 'the character of a ſervant. I have been 'greatly obliged to her.'

'Yes, you are obliged to her,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, kindling into rage at the remembrance of what had paſſed between them. 'Infamous wretch! 'ſhe has done her part towards betraying you to ruin. You have been very 'imprudent, Henrietta; you have talked 'to her of Mr. Melvil too freely: ſhe 'believes you are in love with him, and 'told me ſo, to encourage my attempts 'upon you.'

Henrietta bluſhed at the mention of Mr. Melvil; and preſently after burſt into tears at this diſcovery of Miſs Belmour's baſeneſs and ingratitude, but uttered not a word of complaint or reſentment.

'I will not ſuffer you to remain any 'longer with her,' reſumed Mr. Courteney; 'I will go directly and provide 'you lodgings in the houſe of a worthy 'Engliſh family: I ſuppoſe you can 'have no objection to this propoſal.'

'Why do you look and ſpeak ſo coldly, my dear brother?' ſaid Henrietta. 'To be ſure I can have no objection; diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe; you are in 'the place of my father; I will obey 'you as ſuch.'

'Forgive me, my dear,' ſaid he, tenderly preſſing her hand, 'my temper is 'warm; I have ſpoke to you harſhly: 'indeed, I am greatly alarmed at the 'diſagreeable circumſtances I find you 'in: you have been to blame, you own. 'Alas! my dear ſiſter, what have you 'done to be thus abandoned by your 'aunt? I ſhall be on the rack till I have 'heard all your ſtory; but this is not a 'proper place. Take a civil leave of 'Miſs Belmour, but do not acquaint 'her that you have diſcovered your

'brother, for I know not yet what mea-
'ſures I ſhall take. I will call for you
'in leſs than an hour in a coach.'

Henrietta promiſed to be ready; he took a tender leave of her, and departed.

CHAP. V.

THE HISTORY CONTINUED.

OUR fair heroine continued ſome time alone in her chamber, ſo tranſported at this unexpected meeting with her brother, that ſhe ſometimes doubted whether her happineſs was real, and whether all that had paſſed was not an illuſion of her fancy. When her ſpirits were a little compoſed, ſhe began to conſider what reaſon ſhe ſhould give Miſs Belmour for quitting her ſo ſuddenly: ſhe rightly judged that the ſecrecy her brother had recommended to her, proceeded from his embarraſſment with regard to Mr. Melvil; and ſhe reſolved, however ſtrange her going away might appear to Miſs Belmour, to follow his directions punctually.

The treachery this young lady had been guilty of towards her, excited leſs reſentment than grief for the conviction it brought her that her principles were not changed. Several circumſtances now ruſhed upon her memory, which ſerved to convince her ſhe was relapſing into her former indiſcretions; and ſhe doubted not but Miſs Belmour would be rejoiced to be delivered from her preſence. This thought gave her courage to go to her immediately, and acquaint her with her intention.

'A ſtrange alteration has happened
'in my affairs, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, entering her apartment, 'within this
'hour.'

'That letter has brought you ſome
'good news, I ſuppoſe,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, coldly.

'It came from a dear and worthy
'friend, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'and I have indeed heard ſome good
'news, which I little expected: but I
'am obliged to leave you, and ſo ſud-
'denly, that I am afraid you will think
'me ungrateful for your kindneſs, in
'ſubmitting to this neceſſity.'

'Pray make no apologies,' interrupted Miſs Belmour, with great indifference; 'you are entirely at your li-
'berty.'

Henrietta, who thought ſhe had reaſon for this behaviour, was ſtudying for ſome anſwer, which, without revealing the ſecret motive of her conduct, might tend in ſome meaſure to excuſe it; when a ſervant introduced a gentleman into the room, who, though ſhe had ſeen but once, ſhe knew immediately to be Mr. Morley. She turned eagerly to obſerve how Miſs Belmour was affected by this viſit; and diſcovering no ſigns of ſurprize or anger in her countenance, but an exceſs of joy and ſatisfaction, ſhe concluded this meeting was concerted, and retired immediately, in great concern, to her own room.

Here, while ſhe waited her brother's return, ſhe employed herſelf in writing to Miſs Belmour. In this letter ſhe repeated what ſhe had often urged before, to guard her againſt the baſe deſigns of her lover: ſhe recalled to her remembrance the reſolution ſhe had made, and the vows with which ſhe had ſealed it, never more to liſten to his deſtructive addreſſes; and conjured her, by every motive of religion, honour, and virtue, to baniſh from her ſight a man whoſe only aim was to ruin her.

She had ſcarce finiſhed her letter, when a ſervant came to tell her that ſome company waited for her in a coach. She made haſte to ſeal it, and gave it to Miſs Belmour's maid, with orders to deliver it to her lady. At the door ſhe found her brother, who helped her into the coach, and came in after her. He aſked her, ſmiling, how ſhe had parted with Miſs Belmour?

Henrietta told him, ſhe had left her with company. 'It is indifferent to me
'what company ſhe ſees now you are not
'with her,' ſaid he: 'but my heart will
'not be at reſt till I hear all your ſtory,
'ſiſter.'

Henrietta promiſed to ſatisfy him when they were arrived at her new lodgings. 'I am alſo impatient,' ſaid ſhe, 'to
'know your adventures; why you called
'yourſelf Freeman, and what was the
'cauſe of your not writing to me for ſo
'many months paſt.'

'To ſay the truth, my dear ſiſter,' ſaid he, 'I have been guilty of a little
'neglect in not writing to you oftener:
'however, ſome of my letters muſt cer-
'tainly have miſcarried; for I wrote to
'you both from Bruſſels and Genoa,
'and I don't remember I had any anſwer.
'The account you gave me of Mr. Da-
'mer's

'mer's kindneſs in taking upon him the 'office of your guardian, and your 'happy ſettlement with Lady Meadows, 'made me perfectly eaſy with regard to 'you. I had informed you that I was 'appointed governor to the Marquis of '——. This young nobleman had con-'tracted a friendſhip with me, during 'his ſtay at Leyden, where his governor 'dying, he wrote to his father, the Duke 'of——, in ſuch preſſing terms in my 'favour, which, joined to the knowledge 'of my birth, and very high recom-'mendations from the univerſity, had 'ſo much weight with him, that his 'Grace, notwithſtanding my youth, ap-'pointed me governer to his ſon, with 'a ſalary of five hundred pounds a year. 'I have endeavoured to acquit myſelf 'faithfully of this truſt; my pupil and 'I have always lived together like bro-'thers; and I flatter myſelf his father 'will have no cauſe to repent his having 'conſigned him to my care.'

'But why did you take the names of 'Melvil and Freeman?' interrupted Henrietta.

'The marquis,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'had an inclination to travel 'without the parade of quality, that he 'might, as he wrote to his father, make 'nearer and more uſeful obſervations 'upon men and manners; and, being 'indulged in this ſcheme, we have tra-'velled through France and Italy under 'thoſe names, and with a very ſmall 'equipage. And now, Henrietta, that 'you know the quality of my friend, I 'expect you will not entertain any ridi-'culous hopes from the liking he has 'expreſſed for you. I will do him the 'juſtice to own that he never formed any 'diſhonourable deſigns upon you. The 'character of the woman you lived with, 'encouraged me to make you ſome 'ſhocking propoſals. You behaved very 'properly; but, my dear ſiſter, no words 'can expreſs my anguiſh and confuſion, 'when I heard you own the name of 'Courteney, and your connections with 'Mr. Damer. Good Heaven! what 'did I ſuffer at that moment—What 'a wretch did I ſeem in my own eyes!'

'Let not this cruel remembrance diſ-'turb you now, my dear brother,' ſaid Henrietta; 'I am ſo happy in finding 'you, that I forget all my paſt un-'eaſineſſes.'

Her looks bore delightful witneſs to the truth of what ſhe ſaid. Joy ſparkled in her charming eyes, heightened the roſy bloom of her complexion, and animated her whole air: but, dearly as ſhe loved her brother, the aſſurance he gave her, that her lover had no part in the diſhonourable propoſals he had made her, was a circumſtance that greatly increaſed her ſatisfaction in this meeting.

Mr. Courteney looked at her with admiration and delight, while a tender ſenſe of the misfortunes ſhe had been expoſed to almoſt melted him into tears. As ſoon as the coach ſtopped, he told her, that the maſter of the houſe they were going into was a very worthy man, with whom he was intimately acquainted, and whoſe prudence he could depend upon. 'His wife,' purſued he, 'is a virtuous, 'ſenſible woman: I know no family ſo 'proper to place you in as this; and it 'was extremely lucky that I thought 'of them upon this occaſion, for it was 'not fit you ſhould ſtay with Miſs Bel-'mour, and in ſo ſhort a time it was dif-'ficult to diſpoſe of you properly.'

As ſoon as they alighted, Mrs. Knight came to receive Henrietta, and preſented her huſband to her. Both ſeemed greatly charmed with her appearance, and politely thanked Mr. Courteney for bringing them ſo agreeable a gueſt.

After a few compliments they withdrew, ſuppoſing the brother and ſiſter would be glad of an opportunity to converſe together in private. Mr. Courteney immediately drew his chair near his ſiſter's, and, with a look of impatience, demanded the account ſhe had promiſed him.

Henrietta bluſhed, and begged him not to judge her errors too ſeverely. She then gave him a candid relation of all that had happened to her, from her mother's death till the time ſhe met him at the inn, concealing nothing from him but Miſs Belmour's paſſion for Mr. Morley.

Mr. Courteney was variouſly affected during the courſe of her little ſtory. He often changed countenance, but would not interrupt her. He obſerved with pleaſure, that ſhe laid no ſtreſs upon any part of her conduct, which might with juſtice challenge eſteem and admiration, but appeared nicely conſcious of every little imprudence; and, when ſhe had ended, waited for his reply, with an anxiety that ſhewed ſhe rather expected cenſure than praiſe.

'My

'My dear Henrietta,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, at length, with tears in his eyes; 'you have acted nobly; you cannot 'imagine how much your ſufferings endear you to me, ſince you have behaved under them with ſuch becoming 'fortitude.'

'How happy you make me,' cried Henrietta, 'by your approbation. Indeed, I was afraid you would have 'chidden me ſeverely for leaving my 'aunt in the manner I did.'

'It was a raſh ſtep,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'but your ſubſequent conduct 'has effaced it; and I ſee not how you 'could have otherwiſe avoided being in 'the power of that villain-prieſt.'

After ſome farther converſation on different parts of her ſtory, he looked at his watch: 'How faſt the minutes fly!' ſaid he, ſmiling. 'My dear Henrietta, 'I muſt leave you now, yet I have a 'thouſand things to ſay to you; but I 'will ſee you to-morrow morning. You 'will be very happy,' continued he, 'with Mrs. Knight, and I ſhall have 'no ſcruple to truſt you to her care, till 'I have conducted the marquis to London: we ſhall go in a day or two; and, 'after I have delivered my charge ſafe 'to his father, I will come back to 'Paris, and fetch you.'

Henrietta turned pale at theſe words: 'Then we are to part again ſoon!' ſaid ſhe, in a melancholy accent.

'It would be highly improper for 'you,' replied he, 'to take this journey with us, on ſeveral accounts: I 'ſhall be concerned to leave you, but 'it muſt be ſo.'

'Could you not ſtay till Mr. Damer 'comes?' interrupted Henrietta; and, taking his letter out of her pocket, 'ſee 'here how affectionately he writes to 'me,' added ſhe: 'he propoſes to be 'in Paris in three weeks, and inſiſts 'upon my going to England with him.'

Mr. Courteney read the letter with great pleaſure. Mr. Damer addreſſed her in it by the tender name of daughter; and aſſured her, that he would in every reſpect act like a father towards her. He praiſed her conduct in terms of the higheſt admiration; and begged her not to be uneaſy at her aunt's deſertion of her, ſince it was in his power to make her eaſy, and he was reſolved to do ſo.

'This letter,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, after a pauſe, 'will make ſome little alteration in my plan: I had reſolved not 'to take any notice to the marquis, that 'I had diſcovered you to be my ſiſter, 'but to make ſome excuſe for your diſappearing; however, I ſee it will be 'neceſſary to wait for Mr. Damer. I 'congratulate you, my dear Henrietta, 'on the friendſhip of ſo worthy a man.'

'But will you ſtay till he comes to 'Paris?' interrupted the tender, anxious Henrietta.

'May I depend upon your prudence, 'ſiſter?' ſaid Mr. Courteney. 'It is 'poſſible the marquis may talk to you 'of love: if you give him the leaſt encouragement, you will forfeit my 'eſteem for ever; it ſhall never be ſaid, 'that I took advantage of his youth to 'draw him into a marriage with my 'ſiſter.'

'O! do not ſuſpect me of ſuch meanneſs,' ſaid Henrietta, bluſhing: 'if 'the marquis was a thouſand times 'more amiable than he is, and were I 'ever ſo much prejudiced in his favour, 'I have too juſt a ſenſe of what I owe 'to my birth, to your honour, and my 'own, to admit of a clandeſtine addreſs——You may be entirely eaſy 'upon this article.'

'I am ſatisfied,' replied Mr. Courteney, tenderly preſſing her hand; 'and 'now, my dear Henrietta, adieu for this 'evening.'

'Don't fail to come to-morrow,' ſaid ſhe, following him to the door. He ſmiled aſſentingly; and, having taken leave of Mrs. Knight, who met him as he was going in ſearch of her, he hurried home to his pupil, by whom he was expected with extreme impatience.

CHAP. VI.

FARTHER CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY.

THE marquis, as ſoon as he entered his chamber, perceived that ſomething extraordinary had happened to him.

'Sure,' ſaid he, ſmiling, 'you have 'met with ſome ſtrange adventure, 'Freeman; you look pleaſed, and yet 'there is a thoughtful air in your countenance.'

'I have had an adventure indeed,' replied Mr. Courteney, entering abruptly into

into an affair which could not be concealed from him; 'I have met with my 'ſiſter here in Paris.'

'Your ſiſter!' repeated the marquis; 'you did not expect her, did you?'

'No, faith,' replied Mr. Courteney; 'nor did I know her when I ſaw 'her.'

'That is not ſurprizing,' ſaid the marquis; 'ſhe was very young when 'you parted, I have heard you ſay: I 'hope you will allow me to pay my 'reſpects to her. But,' added he, impatiently, 'how does Miſs Belmour and 'her fair friend?'

'Her fair friend, as you are pleaſed 'to call her,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'is my ſiſter, whom for ſo many weeks 'I have ſeen almoſt every day without 'knowing her.'

'Is it poſſible!' cried the marquis, ſurprized: 'Miſs Benſon your ſiſter! 'Sure you are not in earneſt?'

'Indeed I am,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'I diſcovered her by the oddeſt accident. 'Miſs Belmour herſelf did not know 'who ſhe was; but while I was there, 'ſhe brought her a letter, which had 'been incloſed to her; it was directed 'for Miſs Courteney, and came from 'Mr. Dumer, my ſiſter's guardian: ſhe 'owned the name, and by that means 'I found out my ſiſter. I ſee you are 'aſtoniſhed,' added Mr. Courteney. 'Poor Henrietta has told me all her 'ſtory; the repetition would be tedious, 'but——'

'How can you think ſo?' interrupted the marquis, eagerly: 'can you doubt 'that I am extremely intereſted in every 'thing that concerns you?'

'Excuſe me, my dear marquis,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'I really cannot enter 'into particulars juſt now—Fortune 'ſtill perſecutes my dear father in his 'children. I thought my ſiſter was 'happily ſettled with her aunt Lady 'Meadows, who has no child, and 'adopted her; but the old lady, being 'a rigid Roman Catholick, preſſed her 'very much to change her religion, 'and was at laſt ſo ſtrangely influenced 'by an artful prieſt, who is her chaplain, 'that ſhe had formed a deſign to ſend 'my ſiſter, under the conduct of this fellow, to be ſhut up in a nunnery. The 'poor girl, who was, as I can collect by 'her account, extremely apprehenſive 'of being ſo entirely in the power of this 'ſly prieſt, had no way to avoid this 'misfortune, but by leaving her aunt 'privately, who abſolutely refuſed to 'be reconciled to her on any other condition than her changing her religion. 'Thus deſerted, her guardian being 'abroad, and having nothing to expect 'from her relations, ſhe choſe to go to 'ſervice, and was recommended to Miſs 'Belmour, by the Counteſs of ——, 'her kinſwoman.'

'What a wretch muſt your uncle be!' ſaid the marquis, with tears in his eyes, 'to permit ſuch excellence——' He ſtopped a moment; then ſuddenly graſping his hand, 'O my dear Freeman,' purſued he, 'you have it in your power 'to make me happy——You know 'how ardently I love your charming 'ſiſter——'

'This I was apprehenſive of,' interrupted Mr. Courteney. 'I beg, 'my lord, that you will baniſh theſe 'thoughts.'

'What!' cried the marquis, haſtily; 'have you any objection to my paſſion 'for your ſiſter?'

'Indeed I have, and a very ſtrong 'one,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'and 'that is the certainty of the duke your 'father's diſapprobation of it.'

'It is poſſible indeed,' ſaid the marquis, after a little pauſe, 'that in the 'choice of a wife for me, my father will 'be influenced by the ſame motives that 'moſt fathers are: he will expect a large 'fortune with the perſon I marry; therefore, my dear Charles, you ſee the neceſſity there is for not conſulting him 'in this caſe.'

'Sure you forget, my lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, coolly, 'what 'you once declared, that you would 'never enter into an engagement of this 'kind, contrary to the duke's inclinations.'

'I remember I ſaid ſo,' replied the marquis; 'and were I to make a choice 'which he could reaſonably object to, 'certainly it would be wrong, very 'wrong, to diſobey him: but if the 'want of a fortune can make my father 'diſapprove of my affection for a young 'lady of Miſs Courteney's birth and 'merit, muſt I be governed by ſuch 'ſordid motives?'

The marquis went on to prove, by a great many arguments, common enough on ſuch occaſions, that, in the article of marriage,

marriage, a parent had no right to lay any reſtraint upon the inclinations of his child. Mr. Courteney did not think proper to enter into a diſpute with him upon this ſubject: the patience with which he liſtened to him, made the young nobleman conclude he was not unwilling to come into his meaſures.

'My dear Charles,' added he, after a ſhort pauſe, 'will you not be my advo-'cate with your charming ſiſter? I die 'with impatience to throw myſelf at 'her feet, and offer her my heart and 'hand.'

'You cannot doubt, my lord,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'but that I think my 'ſiſter highly honoured by the eſteem 'you expreſs for her; but ſhe would be 'very unworthy of it, if ſhe was capa-'ble of admitting your addreſſes, either 'unknown to your father, or in op-'poſition to his will. I may venture to 'anſwer for her, that ſhe will not, by 'ſo unjuſtifiable a conduct, expoſe her 'brother to cenſure: and it gives me 'great concern to find you are no better 'acquainted with my ſentiments, than 'to imagine I will ſo baſely betray the 'truſt the duke has repoſed in me, and 'be acceſſary to your diſpoſing of your-'ſelf in a manner which I am very ſure he will not approve.'

'Then I am to expect nothing from 'your friendſhip on this occaſion, Mr. 'Courteney!' replied the marquis, with an air of diſpleaſure: 'you are deter-'mined to raiſe difficulties to my deſign, 'inſtead of removing them; is this act-'ing like a man whom I have loved like 'a brother, and whom it would be my 'higheſt happineſs to call ſo?'

'To call you brother with your fa-'ther's conſent, my lord,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'is an honour I cannot 'hope for, and which, without it, I do 'not wiſh.'

'As noble and diſintereſted as you 'imagine this conduct to be,' ſaid the marquis, riſing, 'it will have another 'name, perhaps, with perſons leſs ro-'mantick in their notions than you are. 'However, Sir, you are no more than 'the brother of Miſs Courteney: if I 'am happy enough to prevail with her 'to receive my addreſſes, I ſhall not 'think your conſent neceſſary.' He paſſed by him with a cool bow, as he pronounced theſe words, and retired to his own chamber.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH WE ARE AFRAID SOME OF OUR READERS WILL THINK MR. COURTENEY ACTS A VERY SILLY PART.

MR. Courteney ſaw plainly, that by refuſing to comply with his pupil's deſires, he ſhould entirely loſe his friendſhip; but, in a caſe where his honour was ſo greatly concerned, this conſideration had no weight with him: and although he had a high opinion of his ſiſter's candour and integrity, yet the intimation Miſs Belmour had given him of her regard for Mr. Melvil, made him apprehenſive that ſhe might be prevailed upon to liſten to the vows of the Marquis of ——. He reſolved, therefore, to keep the place of her abode a ſecret, (for he knew he could depend upon the prudence of Mr. Knight and his wife) and to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to haſten the young lord's departure from France.

The marquis, mean time, was forming very different deſigns. It is ſo rare a thing for a man in love to be either reaſonable or juſt, on occaſions where the intereſt of his paſſion is concerned, that it is not ſurprizing the marquis ſhould impute his governor's conduct with regard to his ſiſter to peeviſhneſs and caprice, and think himſelf extremely ill uſed by his not accepting his offers. He conceived Miſs Courteney to be equally injured by the oppoſition her brother made to the advancement of her fortune; and flattering himſelf that, if his perſon was not diſagreeable to her, he ſhould ſoon overcome any ſcruples Mr. Courteney might have ſuggeſted on account of the duke his father's diſapprobation, he determined to conſult him no farther in the affair, but to addreſs himſelf directly to her.

He ſpent part of the night in writing a letter to her, in which he declared his paſſion in the moſt tender and reſpectful terms, and begged ſhe would allow him to wait upon her. The remaining hours were not ſpent in ſleep, but impatient longings for the morning, which was to confirm or deſtroy his hopes. As ſoon as it was light, he roſe and walked about his room. He read over the letter he had written; he thought it but poorly expreſſed the ardour of his love: he ſat down

down and wrote another, which he liked ſtill leſs, and had recourſe again to the firſt, after adding a poſtſcript, in which he earneſtly repeated his requeſt to be indulged with a few moments private diſcourſe with her.

He ſealed up his letter, and directed it for Miſs Courteney. Her brother had not mentioned to him his having removed her from Miſs Belmour: he ſuppoſed ſhe was ſtill with her; but a doubt occurring to him, whether ſhe was willing to aſſume her real name yet, he thought it beſt to put it in another cover, ſuperſcribed for Miſs Benſon.

It was ſtill too early to ſend to a lady's lodgings; he counted the hours with anxious impatience, and at length rung his bell for his ſervant. As ſoon as he appeared, he gave him the letter, recommending ſecrecy, and charging him not to return without an anſwer.

The valet, when he came back, brought him word that Miſs Benſon was gone; and this was all the intelligence he could get. Miſs Belmour's woman indeed had added with a ſneer, that ſhe went off with Mr. Freeman, and it was ſtrange that his friend Mr. Melvil ſhould not know where ſhe was. This part of the meſſage the fellow prudently ſuppreſſed; for he judged the buſineſs to be an amour, and that the young gentlemen were rivals, and he was afraid of making miſchief.

The marquis, however, eaſily gueſſed that this ſudden removal of Miſs Courteney was her brother's act: he diſmiſſed his ſervant; and beginning now to be ſenſible how much it was in his governor's power to traverſe his deſigns, and how obſtinately he was bent upon doing ſo, he reſigned himſelf up to the moſt violent tranſports of rage; and, during a few moments, all his thoughts ran upon revenge.

Mr. Courteney came into his chamber while he was under theſe agitations; and, ſeeing him walking about with a furious pace—'For Heaven's ſake, my 'lord,' ſaid he, 'what is the matter 'with you?'

The marquis turned ſhort upon him, and, with a voice broken with paſſion, exclaimed—'May I periſh, Courteney, 'if I forgive you!'

Mr. Courteney, who ſuppoſed this reſentment was the conſequence of their converſation the night before, replied calmly—'You are angry, my lord; 'this is no time to talk.'

He was going out of the room, but the marquis, haſtily ſtepping between him and the door, ſhut it with great violence.

'If it is not your time to talk, Sir, it 'is mine,' ſaid he.

'Very well, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, with a compoſed look and accent, 'I am ready to hear you.'

The young nobleman continued to walk in a ſullen ſilence, as if reſolved to be angry, and knew not well what cauſe to aſſign for it; when ſuddenly ſtopping—

'I inſiſt upon your telling me, Sir,' ſaid he, 'why you have ſecreted your 'ſiſter? Do you ſuſpect I have diſho-'nourable deſigns upon her?'

'Diſhonourable deſigns upon my 'ſiſter!' repeated Mr. Courteney, kindling at the expreſſion: 'my lord, no 'man, while I have life, ſhall incur ſuch 'a ſuſpicion with impunity.'

'This ſpirit becomes one of your 'birth,' replied the marquis; 'but let 'me tell you, Mr. Courteney, your con-'duct is not altogether conſiſtent; why 'muſt your ſiſter be hurried, nobody 'knows whither, and concealed with 'ſuch wonderful caution?'

'Are you ſure this is the caſe, my 'lord?' ſaid Mr. Courteney.

'Yes, very ſure,' anſwered the marquis, haſtily.

'Since it was not I who gave your 'lordſhip this information,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, 'you muſt have taken 'ſome trouble to come to the knowledge 'of it; and the motive that ſet you upon 'theſe enquiries ſufficiently juſtifies my 'caution with regard to my ſiſter.'

'Then I am not worthy, it ſeems, to 'pay my addreſſes to your ſiſter,' ſaid the marquis, peeviſhly.

'Indeed, my lord, this is a very 'childiſh ſpeech,' replied Mr. Courteney: 'you know your addreſſes would 'do honour to any woman; but the de-'preſſed ſtate of my ſiſter's fortune 'leaves her no right to expect a man of 'your quality for a huſband; and ſhe 'has too juſt a pride to ſubmit to make 'a clandeſtine marriage; nor will I be 'branded with the imputation of having 'ſeduced my pupil into a marriage with 'my ſiſter.'

'What have you to do with the affair

'at all?' replied the marquis, eagerly: 'leave Miſs Courteney to act as ſhe 'thinks proper; you need not make 'yourſelf anſwerable for my conduct on 'this occaſion. I loved her before I 'knew her to be your ſiſter; cannot your 'romantick honour ſatisfy itſelf with 'being paſſive in this buſineſs?'

'I ſhould but ill perform my engage-'ments to your father, my lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, 'if I did not uſe 'my utmoſt endeavours to prevent you 'from diſpleaſing him in a matter of ſo 'great importance as your marriage.'

'How are you ſure my father will be 'diſpleaſed?' ſaid the marquis: 'Miſs 'Courteney's merit will juſtify my 'choice.'

'Put it upon that iſſue,' replied Mr. Courteney; 'aſk his conſent.'

'Well, Sir, I will aſk his conſent,' reſumed the marquis; 'and now am I 'at liberty to viſit your ſiſter?'

'If you intend, my lord, to be go-'verned by the duke's advice,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'you will certainly be con-'tented to wait his anſwer; and you 'cannot ſuppoſe that, knowing your 'ſentiments ſo well as I do, I will per-'mit my ſiſter to receive your viſits 'while we are ignorant of the duke's in-'tentions.'

The marquis loſt all patience at this unreaſonable obſtinacy, as he conceived it. 'I renounce your friendſhip from 'this moment,' ſaid he, 'for ever; and, 'had you not a ſiſter, I would reſent 'this behaviour in another manner.'

He flung out of the room when he had ſaid this; and, ſhutting himſelf up in his ſtudy, gave his valet orders to allow no body to diſturb him.

Mr. Courteney was not ſo much offended at the harſhneſs of his language, as to hinder him from feeling great concern for the uneaſy ſtate of his mind; and, notwithſtanding his own temper was vehement enough, yet he was able to make ſome allowances for the tranſports of a young man, who ſaw himſelf ſo reſolutely oppoſed in a point he had ſet his heart upon: but deſpairing to pacify his pupil without entering into his deſign, he determined to place his ſiſter effectually out of his reach; and then, if he could not prevail upon him to return to England, nothing remained but to make the duke his father acquainted with the whole affair.

He waited ſome time in expectation that the marquis would come down to breakfaſt as uſual; but finding that he had ordered his chocolate to be brought to him in his ſtudy, he went to viſit his ſiſter, as he had promiſed.

The marquis heard him, as he paſſed by his door, call for his hat and ſword; and his valet entering a moment afterwards with the chocolate, he aſked him, if Mr. Freeman was gone out? Being anſwered that he was, it ſuddenly came into his head that he was going to ſee his ſiſter.

'Follow him inſtantly,' ſaid he to the fellow, 'and bring me word to what 'place he goes; and here is ſomething 'to purchaſe your ſecrecy and diligence.'

The ſight of five Louis d'ors, which the marquis gave him, left the valet no inclination to be diſcreet any longer. He ran out of the room with officious haſte, fully determined to execute his commiſſion with the utmoſt exactneſs. When he got into the ſtreet, he perceived Mr. Courteney walking leiſurely on: he followed him at a diſtance; took particular notice of the houſe he entered; and, after waiting a few moments to ſee whether he came out again, he went back to the marquis with his intelligence.

The young lover did not doubt but he had diſcovered his miſtreſs's abode; and in the joy this thought gave him, he beſtowed many praiſes on his valet's ingenuity, together with a reward of five Louis d'ors more, which he liked ſtill better. He then ordered him to give directions for his chariot to be got ready, while he aſſiſted him to dreſs. His looks diſcovered ſuch an exceſs of ſatisfaction, that the valet, under no apprehenſions that what he had done would produce any diſagreeable conſequences, entered with vaſt delight upon his new poſt of confident to his maſter. The marquis ordered him to ſtay at home till Mr. Freeman came in, and then immediately to come to him at the Hotel de ——.

CHAP. VIII.

IN WHICH MR. COURTENEY GIVES MORE INSTANCES OF HIS FOLLY.

WHILE Henrietta thus innocently ſowed the ſeeds of diſcord between the two friends, ſhe herſelf enjoyed

joyed a perfect compoſure of mind, and indulged the moſt pleaſing reflections on the happy change of her fortune.

She was no longer in the humiliating condition of a ſervant; or, what to her was far more mortifying, a dependant upon the bounty of another; an unknown wanderer, without friends or protectors. She was now under the care of a brother, whom ſhe tenderly loved, whoſe merit could not fail of diſtinguiſhing him, and of forcing that reſpect and conſideration due to a noble birth, and which he, though in a depreſſed fortune, ſo nobly ſupported.

She was aſſured that her guardian was not only free from any unfavourable prejudices on account of her aunt's deſertion of her, but that ſhe might expect all the tender offices of a parent from him; and, what afforded the nice ſenſibility of her ſoul a more delicate ſatisfaction than all this, the only man in the world whom ſhe was capable of regarding with a preference to the reſt of his ſex, though in ſo elevated a rank, had loved her in indigence and obſcurity with honour, and juſtified the tender ſentiments ſhe entertained for him.

Her ſmiles, when ſhe ſaw her brother appear, and the gaiety of her behaviour, convinced him her mind was at eaſe; but his features ſtill retained that impreſſion of chagrin he had ſo lately felt from the marquis's cauſeleſs rage; and there was a ſolemnity in his manner, that, in an inſtant, changed the innocent chearfulneſs of Henrietta into anxiety and concern.

The preſence of Mrs. Knight was a reſtraint upon them both. She perceived it; and as ſoon as the tea-table was removed, (for the ladies were at breakfaſt when Mr. Courteney came in) ſhe retired and left them at liberty.

The moment ſhe was gone, Henrietta eagerly aſked him, if any thing had happened to give him uneaſineſs ſince ſhe ſaw him?

'Yes,' replied he abruptly, 'the 'marquis and I have quarrelled.'

'Quarrelled!' repeated Henrietta, trembling and pale as death, 'have you 'quarrelled?'

Mr. Courteney, who obſerved her emotion, continued to look at her ſo earneſtly, that ſhe bluſhed and caſt down her eyes. 'You ſeem greatly affected with 'this accident,' ſaid he at laſt; 'I wiſh 'I had not mentioned it to you.'

'Could you ſuppoſe,' ſaid Henrietta, in an accent which had at leaſt as much of grief as tenderneſs in it, 'that I 'could hear with indifference what muſt 'neceſſarily be very afflicting to you?'

'Your indifference, perhaps, on this 'occaſion,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'would 'be more welcome to me than the con'cern I ſee you under.'

Henrietta having pondered a little on the meaning of theſe words, replied in a firmer tone, 'Place ſome confidence in 'me, brother; you will find I ſhall de'ſerve it.'

'My dear Henrietta,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, affected with the manner in which ſhe ſpoke, and her expreſſive look, 'you ought to forgive my doubts, when 'you reflect on what Miſs Belmour 'told me: the merit of my noble pupil 'has made an impreſſion on your heart; 'but your marriage with him, ſiſter, 'will bring everlaſting infamy upon 'me.'

'Have I not already declared my re'ſolution to you upon this head?' replied Henrietta.

'The marquis loves you,' reſumed Mr. Courteney; 'he is raſh and in'conſiderate; he has no hope (and indeed it would be ſtrange if he had) that 'the duke his father will conſent to 'ſuch an unequal match; yet he preſſes 'me to introduce him to you as a lover, 'and to favour his deſigns of marrying 'you privately. You may eaſily imagine what anſwer I gave him; the conſequence is, that he has declared himſelf my enemy. We are upon very 'bad terms. But this is not my greateſt 'concern: the marquis, if he can get 'acceſs to you, will teaze you with ſoli'citations; and, diſpoſed as you are in 'his favour, have I not cauſe to ap'prehend you will liſten to him but too 'readily?'

'Although I ſhould confirm your 'ſuſpicions,' ſaid Henrietta, with tears in her eyes, 'yet I muſt again repeat, I 'am grieved at this difference between 'your pupil and you. Nay, I will 'own,' purſued ſhe, avoiding with a ſweet baſhfulneſs the earneſt looks of her brother, 'that I am not inſenſible 'of this young nobleman's affection for 'me; but, after this candid confeſſion, 'you ought to believe me, when I aſſure 'you, that I will enter into no engage'ment with him without your approba'tion; and, to make you eaſy, I will

'comply with any meaſures you think 'proper, to avoid his purſuits.'

'I ſee I may rely upon you,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, charmed with her amiable frankneſs; 'but, my dear Henrietta, I hope you will not allow this 'prepoſſeſſion to take too deep root in 'your heart: ſure your good ſenſe, and 'the delicacy of your ſentiments, will 'hinder you from giving way to a hopeleſs paſſion.'

'I beg you not to talk to me on this 'ſubject,' interrupted Henrietta, tears, in ſpite of her endeavours to reſtrain them, flowing faſt down her face; 'only 'tell me what you would have me do to 'avoid the marquis: Have you formed 'any plan? Doubt not of my readineſs 'to comply with it.'

'Have you any objections to boarding in a convent till Mr. Damer comes?' ſaid Mr. Courteney.

'No,' replied Henrietta, half ſmiling, 'for I cannot ſuſpect you have a 'deſign upon my religion, as my aunt 'had, and mean to confine me all my 'life.'

'No, really,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, ſmiling likewiſe; 'but it will be 'more difficult for the marquis to get 'acceſs to you in a convent than here; 'and, as it is probable enough that this 'affair will make ſome noiſe, it will be 'more for your reputation to have it 'known that you lived in ſuch a reſpectable ſociety, where there were ſo many 'witneſſes of your conduct, and ſuch 'exact regularity required, than in private lodgings, where you were accountable to nobody for your actions.'

'Then you intend to leave me before Mr. Damer comes?' ſaid Henrietta, ſighing.

'To be ſure,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'I will force the marquis away if 'poſſible; and, if I find all my remonſtrances ineffectual, the duke muſt interpoſe his authority.'

'You intend to write to him, then?' ſaid Henrietta.

'Certainly,' replied he; 'don't you 'think I ought to do ſo, ſiſter?'

'Indeed I do,' anſwered ſhe.

'I am glad of it,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, 'yet this procedure will embroil 'me more with the marquis; but I ſee 'no help for it, unleſs Mr. Damer ſhould 'happen to come ſooner than we expect, 'and take you with him to England. 'I hope to prevail upon my pupil to 'leave Paris in two or three days; and, 'if I have not the ſatisfaction to leave 'you under Mr. Damer's care, a convent is the fitteſt place for you to retire to.'

Henrietta, having reflected on her brother's propoſal, found it ſo reaſonable, and ſo much to the advantage of her reputation, that ſhe readily yielded to put it in immediate execution.

Mrs. Knight being deſired to return, Mr. Courteney told her their deſign, and requeſted her aſſiſtance. She expreſſed ſome concern at being ſo ſoon to loſe her agreeable gueſt, but undertook to tranſact the affair; and it was reſolved, that ſhe ſhould go that day, and procure the young lady to be admitted as a penſioner in the Auguſtine nunnery of Engliſh ladies in Paris.

Mr. Courteney, having promiſed his ſiſter to come and conduct her to the convent the next day, took leave of her, highly ſatisfied with her docility, and returned home. He was ſurprized to hear that the marquis was gone abroad; but, having no ſuſpicion of his intention to viſit Henrietta, whoſe abode he concluded was ſtill a ſecret to him, he was only concerned leſt his health ſhould ſuffer, by venturing out before it was fully re-eſtabliſhed.

The marquis's valet no ſooner ſaw Mr. Courteney return, than he ran immediately to acquaint his maſter, who ſet forwards, with a beating heart, to viſit his miſtreſs. The valet had given ſo exact a direction, that the coachman had no difficulty to find the houſe. The marquis alighted the moment the door was opened, and aſking the ſervant for Miſs Courteney, was inſtantly introduced into a parlour, where Henrietta was ſitting alone, Mrs. Knight having juſt left her to go and execute her commiſſion.

The ſight of the marquis threw her into the utmoſt confuſion. She roſe, however, and received him with great reſpect: he approached her bowing, and made her a genteel compliment upon her happy meeting with her brother.

Henrietta would not ſuffer this ſubject to be dwelt upon long, leſt it ſhould lead to circumſtances too intereſting. She changed the converſation to indifferent matters, and took care that it ſhould not flag a moment; ſo that the marquis, partly embarraſſed by that awe which always accompanies a ſincere paſſion, and partly by

by the prudent management of Henrietta, found he had protracted his visit to a considerable length, without drawing any advantage from it.

Alarmed at the thoughts of losing an opportunity, which the rigid and inflexible temper of his governor might prevent him from meeting with again, he suddenly assumed courage to make her a declaration of his passion, but in terms the most tender and respectful, and with an explicitness that became one of his rank and fortune to use towards a young lady in her delicate circumstances, whom he would not for a moment leave in doubt of the sincerity of his professions, and his firm resolution to adhere to them.

Henrietta listened to them with a graceful modesty; and, when he earnestly pressed for her answer, she assured him, that she was very sensible of the honour he did her, and should always think herself obliged to him for having entertained such favourable sentiments of her, as could make him overlook the inequality there was between them. As for the rest, she referred him to her brother, who, she said, was in the place of a father to her, and by whose advice and direction she was determined to be governed entirely.

The marquis would have had no reason to be dissatisfied with this answer, if he had not known that he had nothing to expect from an application to her brother; and the apprehension that she also knew it, and therefore took this method to free herself from his importunities, gave him so much concern, that he turned pale, and sighing, fixed his eyes upon the ground. His air, his attitude, his looks, were all so moving, so expressive of tenderness, anxiety, and grief, that Henrietta durst not trust herself to behold him, lest he should turn his eyes towards her, and discover in hers the too great interest she took in his uneasiness.

Some moments passed in an affecting silence on both sides, during which the marquis remained immoveably fixed in the same pensive posture, till rouzed by the opening of the door, and the appearance of Mr. Courteney. Henrietta's face was in an instant covered with blushes: the marquis seemed greatly embarrassed. Mr. Courteney shewed some surprize at first; but, recovering himself, he spoke to his pupil with an easy air, and relieved both him and his sister from their confusion, by entering immediately into an indifferent conversation.

The marquis drew a favourable omen from this behaviour: his looks resumed their usual sweetness and vivacity; and, during a whole hour that they continued together, nothing could be more spirited and lively than the discourse between three persons, who had the most perfect tenderness for one another, yet, from their several circumstances, were obliged mutually to oppose and give pain.

The marquis at length, with apparent reluctance, put an end to his visit, as did Mr. Courteney likewise, though he was very desirous of talking to his sister in private. When they were in the chariot together, the young lord was several times upon the point of pressing his governor again upon the subject of his love, as he seemed to be less inclined than formerly to oppose him; but he was restrained from entering into any explanation, by his apprehension of destroying those hopes he had so lately begun to entertain, and of rendering his access to Henrietta more difficult for the future: Mr. Courteney also had his reasons for preventing any such explanation, and industriously amused him with other discourse.

The marquis could not help thinking it strange that he took no notice of the visit he had made his sister: but, as love is ever ready to flatter it's own wishes, he began to imagine that Mr. Courteney had relaxed in the severity of his resolutions, but knew not yet how to yield with a good grace; he favoured his embarrassment therefore for the present, and they passed the remaining part of the day in their usual company and diversions.

When they came home at night, the marquis desired to have an hour's conversation with him; but Mr. Courteney, complaining of a sudden head-ach, excused himself, and retired to his own chamber.

The next morning, before his pupil was up, he repaired to Mrs. Knight's. She told him, that every thing was agreed on for the reception of the young lady; and he had the satisfaction to find his sister making preparations for her removal, without any appearance of discontent. She acquainted him with what had passed in the conversation between the marquis and her.

'I have no doubt of his affection for

'you,'

'you,' said Mr. Courteney; 'we must 'leave the event of it to Providence, and 'act so as that, whatever happens, we 'may not incur censure.'

As soon as breakfast was over, Henrietta, accompanied by Mrs. Kinght and her brother, went in a coach to the convent, where she was very civilly received by the superiour. Mr. Courteney promised to visit her soon, and took leave of her, to wait upon Mrs. Knight home; after which he returned to the marquis, who had enquired for him several times.

CHAP. IX.

IN WHICH THE READER, IT IS PRESUMED, CAN MAKE NO DISCOVERIES CONCERNING THE EVENT OF THIS HISTORY.

THE marquis, when he saw him enter his chamber, approached him with an obliging air, and affectionately pressing his hand—

'May I hope, my dear Courteney,' said he, 'that you have overcome your 'fantastick scruples, and that you will 'favour my pretensions to your charming sister? I will make you no apology for stealing a visit to her; you 'would, I am sure, have done the same 'in my situation. Indeed, Charles, 'you must either resolve to give me Miss 'Courteney, or to see me miserable. 'She referred me to you; my happiness 'depends upon a single word of yours; 'can you be so cruel to refuse me this 'instance of your friendship?'

'You know, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'that there is not any thing 'you can desire of me, consistent with 'my honour, which I would refuse; 'but, unless I would make myself infamous, I cannot yield to your marrying my sister without the duke's consent. Hear what I have to propose,' continued he, perceiving him to be in a violent emotion. 'Let us return to England immediately. You have often 'told me, that the duke is a most tender 'father; you are an only child; it is 'possible he may be prevailed upon to 'yield to your desires, if you tell him 'you cannot be happy without my sister. 'Let us make the trial at least.'

'I agree to it,' interrupted the marquis, eagerly, 'provided you will pro'mise me, that if my father is so unreasonable as to refuse his consent, you 'will no longer oppose my marriage. I 'am of age; it is fit that, in a matter 'of such importance to the future happiness of my whole life, I should be at 'liberty to follow my inclinations. 'Speak, Charles, will you make me this 'promise?'

'Indeed, I will not, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'you must not expect 'it.'

'Detested obstinacy!' cried the marquis, flinging his hand away, which he had held till this moment; 'what a 'wretch am I to have my happiness de'pend upon the will of a capricious man, 'who mistakes his romantick whims for 'honour! But observe what I say, 'Courteney,' added he, turning hastily towards him, 'you shall not hinder me 'from visiting your sister; nothing but 'her absolute commands shall prevent 'my seeing her.'

'My sister,' said Mr. Courteney, 'will stay no longer in France, than till 'Mr. Damer, to whose care her mother 'left her at her death, returns from 'Montpelier: he is to conduct her to 'England; and she is gone to board in 'a convent till his arrival.'

'Gone to a convent!' repeated the marquis; 'this is your scheme, I sup'pose.'

'I hoped to prevail upon you,' said Mr. Courteney, 'since you are quite 'recovered, to leave Paris immediately; 'and I thought a convent the properest 'place for my sister to reside in till her 'guardian comes.'

The marquis instantly running over in his thoughts the use that might be made of this intelligence, replied, that he had no inclination to leave Paris yet; and broke off all farther conversation by quitting the room.

In effect, he had resolved to make an application to Mr. Damer, supposing, that since he had not the same foundation for scruples as his governor, he would readily listen to an offer so advantageous for his ward.

Mr. Courteney penetrated into his views; and doubtful how Mr. Damer would act, and whether his sister, having the sanction of his approbation, might not give way to the motions of her own heart, and encourage the addresses of the marquis; he concluded it necessary to make the duke acquainted with the whole affair, that he might take such measures

meaſures as he judged proper to reſtrain his ſon from an action which would incur his diſpleaſure.

He wrote accordingly that day, and having thus diſcharged his duty, his mind was more at eaſe.

The marquis, full of hope that his new ſcheme would be ſucceſsful, made no effort to ſee Henrietta, for fear of raiſing ſuſpicions in her brother: but the coldneſs and reſerve with which he treated him, ſufficiently ſhewed how much he reſented his conduct.

Henrietta was ſoon reconciled to a retirement, in which ſhe had full liberty to indulge her reflections; for ſhe was in love enough to find more ſatisfaction in being alone, than in the gayeſt and moſt agreeable ſociety. Her brother did not fail to viſit her every day: he found her ſatisfied with her ſituation; and, in appearance, no otherwiſe affected with his approaching departure, which he gave her room to expect, than what her tenderneſs for him might well allow of.

In the mean time the Duke of ——, having received Mr. Courteney's letter, was greatly pleaſed with the nobleneſs and generoſity of his behaviour. He wrote to him immediately, in terms of the higheſt friendſhip and regard; and, acquainting him with the purport of his letter to his ſon, recommended it to him to haſten his departure, aſſuring him, he had the firmeſt reliance upon his integrity and honour.

The packet, to avoid ſuſpicion, had been directed as uſual to the marquis, who was not ſurprized to find a letter in it for Mr. Courteney, to whom his father was accuſtomed to write often: he ſent it to him immediately; and, after reading his own, he went to Mr. Courteney's chamber, holding it ſtill in his hand.

'My father writes to me,' ſaid he, 'to leave Paris as ſoon as poſſible. He 'does not expreſsly ſay, that he is ill; 'but, from ſome hints in his letter, I 'can collect that this is the cauſe of his 'extreme earneſtneſs to ſee me. You 'cannot imagine how much I am af-'fected with this accident,' purſued he, ſighing. 'I love my father: I did not 'know how much I loved him, till I 'feared his loſs. I am determined to 'ſet out to-morrow from Paris; but I 'muſt ſee your ſiſter firſt, Courteney, 'nor ought you to refuſe me the ſatiſ-'faction of telling her, that I depart 'with a firm reſolution never to be but 'hers.'

'Well, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, after a little pauſe, 'we will go 'together, and take leave of my ſiſter.'

'I was to blame,' ſaid the marquis, 'to expect any indulgence from you; 'we will go together, then, ſince it muſt 'be ſo.' He retired again to his own apartment to write to his father; and in the mean time Mr. Courteney gave the neceſſary orders for their journey the next morning.

Henrietta had been prepared, by a billet from her brother, for the viſit that was intended her. The news of their departure had coſt her ſome tears; but when ſhe was informed they waited for her in the parlour of the convent, ſhe appeared before them with all that ſoft compoſure and dignity of manners, which never forſook her in the moſt trying ſituations.

Mr. Courteney watched the turn of her countenance when the marquis accoſted her, and was pleaſed to ſee it equally free from embarraſſment and affectation; and that, notwithſtanding all the expreſſive language of her lover's eyes, ſhe had ſo much command over herſelf, as to ſeem the leaſt intereſted perſon in the company.

Politeneſs obliged the marquis to ſhorten his viſit, that the brother and ſiſter might be at liberty to take a private leave of each other. He roſe from his ſeat, and approached Henrietta with an air that left her no room to doubt of his intention to ſay ſomething particular to her; and now, for the firſt time, her looks betrayed ſome little confuſion.

'I cannot go away, Madam,' ſaid he, 'without renewing the declaration 'I made you ſome days ago; and I 'take this opportunity to aſſure you, 'before your brother, who knows the 'ſincerity of my heart, that my ſenti-'ments for you will ever be the ſame: 'and, if you do not forbid it, I will 'carry away with me the dear hope of 'being able one day to merit your 'eſteem.'

Henrietta curtſied in ſilence; but her bluſhes, and the ſoft confuſion ſhe was in, ſeemed no unfavourable omen for the marquis: he bowed reſpectfully, and retired.

Mr. Courteney, affecting not to perceive his ſiſter's concern, entered, immediately after his pupil's departure, into other

other diſcourſe. He recommended it to her to improve her guardian's eſteem for her; and aſſured her he would viſit Lady Meadows, and uſe his utmoſt endeavours to remove her prejudices, and reſtore her to the place ſhe formerly held in her affection. At her deſire likewiſe he promiſed to call upon Mrs. Willis, to whom ſhe had been ſo greatly obliged. He charged her to keep up no ſort of intimacy with Miſs Belmour, though ſhe ſhould ſeek it; but permitted her, in company with Mr. Damer, to pay her a farewel viſit: and, indeed, the conduct of that young lady, ſince the arrival of Mr. Morley, juſtified theſe precautions.

Henrietta promiſed to follow all his directions. He ſaid a thouſand affectionate things to her; and then, deſiring to ſee the ſuperiour, he tenderly recommended his ſiſter to her care; took a ſhort leave, and went home; while Henrietta retired to her chamber to weep.

The marquis was not viſible till the next morning, when he was informed that the poſt-chaiſe was at the door. His extreme melancholy during the whole journey gave his governor great concern: but he in vain attempted to amuſe him; for though the marquis behaved to him with all imaginable reſpect, yet he was ſo cold and reſerved, that he found it impoſſible to renew his former freedom with him.

The Duke of —— had informed them, that he ſhould be at his country ſeat; and, immediately upon their landing in England, they repaired thither. The duke received his ſon with the moſt tender tranſports, and his governor with every mark of eſteem and regard.

The morning after their arrival, he ſent for Mr. Courteney into his cloſet, and thanked him in very affectionate terms for having ſo faithfully and honourably diſcharged his truſt. He politely avoided mentioning the affair of the young lord's paſſion for his ſiſter, becauſe ſhe was his ſiſter; but ſaid enough to convince him, that he had the moſt grateful ſenſe of his diſintereſted conduct upon that occaſion. He ſettled on him, during his life, the ſum he had allowed him while he travelled with the marquis; and offered him, in the moſt cordial manner, all his intereſt towards procuring him an eſtabliſhment ſuitable to his birth.

Mr. Courteney received theſe inſtances of the duke's friendſhip for him with reſpect and gratitude; but he was more touched with the old nobleman's delicacy with regard to his ſiſter, than with all the favours conferred on himſelf.

The intereſt of this ſiſter, whom he loved with the moſt tender affection, made him haſten his departure from the duke's ſeat, that he might wait on his aunt, who he had heard was in London. The duke embraced him tenderly at parting, and obliged him to promiſe that he would return as ſoon as poſſible. The marquis loſt all his reſerve and coldneſs when he took leave of his governor, his friend, and, what was more than all, the brother of his adored Henrietta.

'You have uſed me unkindly,' ſaid he in a low voice, yet preſſing him tenderly to his breaſt; 'but I ſhall always 'love you.'

Mr. Courteney let fall ſome tears, but made no anſwer; and immediately after mounting his horſe, he ſet out for London, attended by his own ſervant, and one of the duke's, whom his grace had ordered to eſcort him.

CHAP. X.

WHICH LEAVES THE READER STILL IN DOUBT.

MR. Courteney, when he came within a ſhort diſtance of London, diſmiſſed the duke's ſervant, with compliments to his grace and the marquis, and proceeded on his journey. It came into his head to alight at the houſe of Mrs. Willis, from whom it was poſſible he might receive ſome intelligence that would be of uſe to him. The good woman received him with great civility; but, when he told her his name, ſhe was in tranſports, and enquired for her beloved Miſs Courteney with the tender anxiety of a mother.

Mr. Courteney told her, that his ſiſter would ſoon be in London with her guardian. He took occaſion to thank her for her friendly care of her, which Henrietta had mentioned with the utmoſt gratitude; and aſſured her, he ſhould always conſider himſelf as highly obliged to her.

'How largely do I ſhare in my dear 'Miſs Courteney's joy,' ſaid ſhe, 'for 'ſo happy a meeting with her beloved 'brother! Heaven will, I doubt not, 'ſhower it's bleſſings on her; for ſure, 'if

'if ever mortal deſerved them, ſhe does. 'O! Sir, your ſiſter is an angelick crea-'ture——'

Mrs. Willis, indulging the tender effuſions of her heart, continued to expatiate on Henrietta's virtues, till Mr. Courteney, though not diſpleaſed to hear her, interrupted her, to aſk ſome queſtions concerning his aunt.

'I was going to write to Miſs Courteney to-day, Sir,' replied ſhe; 'for 'I have great news to acquaint her with. 'That vile prieſt, who was the cauſe of 'all her uneaſineſs, has at length ſhewn 'himſelf in his true colours: the ſanctified hypocrite was detected in 'an amour with Lady Meadows's woman. 'This affair has opened her eyes; ſhe 'thinks her niece has been greatly in-'jured by the miſrepreſentations of this 'wretch, whom ſhe has diſcarded with 'infamy; and the firſt proof ſhe has given 'of her favourable diſpoſition towards 'Miſs Courteney, was her taking again 'her former woman, whom ſhe had diſ-'miſſed on account of her attachment to 'the young lady. I had this intelligence 'from Mrs. White herſelf; for ſo your 'aunt's woman, Sir, is called. She 'ſays ſhe does not doubt but her lady 'will write to Miſs Courteney in the 'moſt tender manner, and invite her 'home again.'

This news gave Mr. Courteney great ſatisfaction: he reſolved not to delay a moment viſiting his aunt; his portmanteau had been carried into a chamber by Mrs. Willis's directions, and thither he retired to dreſs. As ſoon as he was ready, he got into a hackney-coach, and, fraught with a thouſand kind wiſhes from this faithful friend of his ſiſter, he proceeded to the houſe of Lady Meadows.

He was ſo lucky as to find her at home, and ſent in his name without any heſitation. The old lady, in a violent flutter of ſpirits, advanced as far as the door of her apartment to meet her nephew. His graceful form and polite addreſs prejudiced her inſtantly in his favour; and ſhe received him with all the tenderneſs he could have wiſhed, and with much more than he expected.

Her firſt enquiries were for Henrietta. Mr. Courteney was pleaſed with this ſolicitude; but he obſerved that, during the courſe of their converſation, her attention with regard to his ſiſter decreaſed conſiderably. He praiſed her with all the modeſty, yet with all the affection of a brother.

Lady Meadows, who had heard a very advantageous account of her niece from the counteſs, her good friend, aſſured him that ſhe knew his ſiſter's merit, and had reſtored her to that tenderneſs and eſteem, which ſome little errors of hers, and ſome unjuſt ſuſpicions of her own, which had been artfully infuſed into her, had robbed her of. She expreſſed great ſatisfaction at hearing of her guardian's kindneſs: but her words—'I hope he 'will do ſomething for her,' gave Mr. Courteney great concern; who, from the firſt moment that he had heard Henrietta was likely to recover her favour, had formed a ſcheme to make her and the marquis happy.

Lady Meadows perceived that he was affected with that expreſſion: ſhe therefore added, that his ſiſter might depend upon a welcome reception from her, whenever ſhe returned to England.

Though there was nothing to object to the words of this declaration, yet there was a great deal to the manner of it. In the coldneſs with which ſhe made it, he ſaw the diſappointment of his hopes. In reality, Lady Meadows had begun to entertain a prodigious fondneſs for her nephew; and Henrietta had now but the ſecond place in her affection. The longer ſhe converſed with him, the more this fondneſs increaſed. Women are ever readier to diſcover merit in the other ſex than their own. Henrietta had as many amiable qualities as her brother, but Lady Meadows was not ſo ſenſible of them: and Mr. Courteney made as great a progreſs in her affections in three hours, as his ſiſter had done in as many months.

When he roſe up to take his leave, ſhe declared with ſome vehemence, that he muſt have no other home than her houſe. 'You have an aunt,' added ſhe, ſmiling, 'though you have no uncle, nor 'any other relations.' Mr. Courteney reddened with indignation at the mention of his unworthy uncle; but, recovering himſelf, he made her ſuitable acknowledgments for her kindneſs; and, at her deſire, immediately diſpatched a meſſenger to Mrs. Willis, to acquaint her that he ſhould not return, and at the ſame time ſent orders to his ſervant to bring his portmanteau.

Lady Meadows having given direc-

tions for an apartment to be prepared for Mr. Courteney, they paſſed the evening together with great ſatisfaction, particularly on the part of the old lady, who thought herſelf extremely happy in having ſo accompliſhed a youth for her nephew. All her thoughts ran upon the pleaſure ſhe ſhould have in ſhewing him to her friends and acquaintance, and of piquing his unnatural uncle, by openly profeſſing her regard for him.

More than a week after his arrival was ſpent in a continual ſucceſſion of viſits, to all which he attended her; and ſo abſolutely had he won her heart in that time, that ſhe determined on nothing leſs than the making him her ſole heir. Mr. Courteney, who was deſirous of improving the favour he was in to his ſiſter's advantage, took all opportunities to revive his aunt's affection for her; ſo that, to pleaſe him, ſhe expreſſed an impatience to ſee her. He received letters from her, and from the Duke of ——, the ſame day. Henrietta informed him, that ſhe had heard from Mr. Damer, and that ſhe expected him in Paris in a few days: that the affairs he had to ſettle there, would detain him but a ſhort time; after which they were to ſet out immediately for England. She added, that the marquis had wrote to her, and gave him a brief recapitulation of his letter, which ſeemed to be dictated by the moſt ardent affection, and the ſtricteſt principles of honour.

The duke's letter contained only an earneſt requeſt to ſee him as ſoon as poſſible. Lady Meadows was very unwilling to part with him, though he aſſured her, he would return in two or three days. He ſpent part of the night in anſwering his ſiſter's letter, and ſet out the next morning in a poſt-chaiſe for the duke's ſeat: he reached it in the evening at ſupper-time.

He found only the duke and his ſon at table; in the countenance of the latter, he obſerved a profound melancholy, which ſenſibly affected him. The duke received him with great kindneſs. The marquis ſpoke little, but ſeemed pleaſed to ſee him. The next morning the duke ſent for Mr. Courteney into his cloſet.

'What ſhall I do with my ſon?' ſaid he to him abruptly, as ſoon as he entered. 'You ſee the way he is in; he will 'certainly break my heart. I made him 'a very advantageous propoſal three 'days ago: he tells me poſitively his 'heart is engaged; yet he knows I am 'very deſirous the match I mentioned 'to him ſhould take place. This is ſuch 'an inſtance of obſtinacy and diſobedience, as I know not how to pardon. 'Little did I imagine that his return, 'which I ſo paſſionately wiſhed for, 'would be productive of ſo much uneaſineſs to me.'

The duke pauſed here, and looked earneſtly at Mr. Courteney; who, not knowing what it was he expected from him, or to what aim his words were directed, continued ſilent, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

'I ſee you are concerned,' reſumed the duke, 'for the trouble this unlucky 'affair gives me.'

'Indeed I am, my lord, moſt ſincerely,' replied Mr. Courteney.

'Then I may depend upon your readi'neſs to aſſiſt me in removing it,' ſaid his Grace. 'Hear what I have to propoſe. 'Your ſiſter, allowing for the warmth 'of an admirer's imagination, appears 'to me, by my ſon's account of her, to 'have a great deal of merit: ſuch a 'young lady cannot be without pretenders to her heart. It would give me 'great pleaſure to contribute to her eſtabliſhment: if you have a match in view 'for her, let me know if I can forward 'it, either by my purſe or my intereſt. 'I candidly confeſs to you, that mere 'generoſity is not my motive for making 'you this offer: my ſon's paſſion is 'ſtrengthened by hope; when your 'ſiſter is married, I may find it leſs difficult to prevail upon him to yield me 'the obedience I require, and which I 'have a right to expect. You do not 'anſwer me, Mr. Courteney,' added his Grace, after a little pauſe; 'is there any 'thing diſagreeable in this propoſal?'

'Thus preſſed, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'it becomes me to 'ſpeak with plainneſs and ſincerity.— 'I have no power over my ſiſter's inclinations, and no conſideration whatever ſhould oblige me to hurry her into 'a marriage which her own choice did 'not direct her to. Beſides, I am not 'without ſuſpicions, that the merit of 'the marquis has made ſome impreſſion 'on her heart; and, though ſhe has ſacrificed it to her honour and duty, yet 'it will for ſome time, no doubt, render 'her deaf to any offer that could be made 'her. I am very certain, my lord, that 'ſhe will never encourage the addreſſes

'of

'of the marquis without your Grace's 'consent; but were she capable of act-'ing differently from my hopes and ex-'pectations, my honour is concerned 'to prevent it: and I most solemnly 'assure your Grace, that my sister shall 'never be the wife of the marquis with-'out your express approbation.'

The duke could not help being pleased with the candour and spirit of this reply. 'We must leave this affair then as we 'found it,' said he: 'I am so well con-'vinced of your integrity and honour, 'that I rely upon you entirely to prevent 'any consequences that may be disagree-'able to me.'

The duke that moment perceiving his son crossing the terrace opposite to his window, desired Mr. Courteney to join him. 'You have still great influence 'over the marquis,' said he; 'try what 'your persuasions can do to make him 'alter his behaviour; this obstinacy of 'his both afflicts and offends me.'

Mr. Courteney bowed, and quitted the duke's closet immediately. The marquis, when he saw him coming to-wards him, stopped to wait for him.

'You have been closeted with my 'father,' said he to him, smiling: 'may 'I know the subject of your conver-'sation?'

'I dare engage your lordship guesses,' replied Mr. Courteney, smiling likewise.

'I believe I do,' said the marquis; 'the duke has been complaining of me 'for my disobedience, has he not?'

'His Grace tells me he has made you 'a proposal, my lord, which you have 'rejected,' answered Mr. Courteney, 'and he is under great concern about 'it.'

'Well, I am sorry for his uneasiness,' interrupted the marquis: 'but there is 'no help for it.'

'Ah, my lord,' said Mr. Courteney, 'have I not cause to be very uneasy also? 'I who know your motive for disob-'liging the duke, in a point he seems 'to have so much at heart?'

'You are mistaken,' resumed the marquis; 'I should act as I do, though 'I had never seen Miss Courteney. But 'tell me, my dear Charles, have you 'heard from your sister?'

'I have, my lord,' replied he.

'She is well, I hope,' resumed the marquis, sighing.

'She says nothing to the contrary,' answered Mr. Courteney; 'but I find 'your lordship has written to her.'

'Then she mentions me in her letter?' cried the marquis, eagerly: 'I did in-'deed write to her, but she would not 'favour me with an answer. But, dear 'Charles,' continued he, 'have you not 'Miss Courteney's letter about you? 'let me see that part where I am men-'tioned. Shew me only my name, 'written by her dear hand, you know 'not what pleasure it will give me to see 'it.'

'Upon my honour I have not her let-'ter here,' said Mr. Courteney. 'Why, 'why, my lord,' pursued he, in great concern, 'will you indulge this fatal 'passion for my sister? you must by this 'time be convinced that it can produce 'nothing but uneasiness to the duke, 'yourself, to me, and even to her.'

'To her!' repeated the marquis. 'O! Charles, your sister is wrapped up 'in indifference and reserve; she has not 'the least sensibility for what I suffer 'upon her account.'

'You are too generous, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'to wish my 'sister should encourage any sentiments 'for you but those of respect and esteem. 'It would be presumption in her to hope 'for the duke's approbation of your 'passion; and were she too sensible of it, 'she must be unhappy.'

'It is enough for me to be unhappy,' resumed the marquis, sighing; 'un-'happy in the avarice of my father, 'to whom I have laid open my whole 'heart. The want of a fortune is all 'the objection he has to Miss Courte-'ney; for he appeared charmed with her 'character, and her birth he knows. 'Unhappy too, in a rigid friend, who 'sacrifices me to the fantastick notions 'he has formed of honour. O! Charles, 'little did I imagine once that you 'would have contributed all in your 'power to make me miserable.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Mr. Cour-teney, 'this reflection is cruel: this very 'moment all my thoughts are employed 'on the means to make you happy.'

'Now you are again my friend,' in-terrupted the marquis, embracing him eagerly: 'will you then at last give me 'your charming sister? All that duty 'can require I have performed: I have

'implored my father's conſent; he has 'had the cruelty to refuſe it me; and 'this on a motive ſo ſordid, that I 'am juſtifiable in following my ineli-'nations without ſoliciting him any 'more.'

'You miſtake my intentions, my 'lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney; 'no, never expect that I will conſent to 'your marrying my ſiſter without the 'duke's approbation.'

'What then did you mean,' ſaid the marquis, 'by the hopes you gave me 'juſt now?'

'To prevail, if poſſible, upon the 'duke to conſent to your marriage,' replied Mr. Courteney.

The marquis ſighed, and caſt down his eyes, as if hopeleſs that this expedient would ſucceed; but would not ſay any thing to divert him from his purpoſe: yet he thought it ſtrange that he ſhould undertake a taſk, which, intereſted as he was, ſeemed leſs proper for him than any other perſon.

Mr. Courteney gueſſed his thoughts, but would not explain himſelf any farther. In reality, what the marquis had ſaid of his father's having no other objection to his choice but the want of a fortune, confirmed him in his deſign of uſing the favour he was in with Lady Meadows to the advantage of his ſiſter; and he was not without expectations of prevailing upon her, by the proſpect of ſo honourable a match for her niece, to do as much for her as ſhe had formerly promiſed, in caſe ſhe had married the old baronet.

The marquis, who beheld him earneſtly, perceived ſomething was labouring in his mind, and he began to entertain hopes of ſucceſs, though he knew not on what reaſonably to found them. 'I cannot,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, obſerving the tender ſolicitude with which he gazed on him, 'communicate to you 'the ſcheme I have formed to reconcile 'the duke to your wiſhes, for reaſons 'which will be obvious enough hereafter. 'Only thus much I will ſay to ſatisfy 'you, that I think it is highly probable 'I ſhall ſucceed; but there is one con-'dition which you muſt yield to, and 'which I tell you plainly is the price I 'ſet upon my endeavours to ſerve you in 'this affair.'

'Name it,' interrupted the marquis, eagerly; 'it muſt be a ſtrange one in-'deed if I do not comply with it.'

'You muſt give me a ſolemn promiſe, 'my lord,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, 'not to ſeek my ſiſter's conſent to a 'clandeſtine marriage, if I ſhould fail 'in my endeavours to procure the duke's 'approbation, and you muſt make the 'ſame promiſe to his Grace likewiſe.— 'Nay, my lord,' purſued he, obſerving that he heſitated, 'you riſk nothing by 'entering into this engagement, for I 'am bound by oath, as well as by ho-'nour, to prevent my ſiſter from being 'yours upon any terms but the duke's 'expreſs conſent; and, depend upon it, 'you will never gain hers but on the 'ſame condition.'

'Well,' replied the marquis, 'you 'have my promiſe, and I will make the 'ſame declaration to my father: it will 'be time enough to tell him, if your 'ſcheme proves unſucceſsful, my fixed 'reſolution never to marry at all, if I 'do not marry Miſs Courteney.'

Mr. Courteney had already gained ſo important a point, that he did not think it neceſſary to combat this reſolution at that time. They walked together into the houſe; and the marquis conceiving that it might be of ſome advantage to Mr. Courteney's ſcheme to take an early opportunity of making the promiſe he required of him, the duke had that ſatisfaction in his next private converſation with his ſon, and was charmed with this new inſtance of Mr. Courteney's integrity.

The marquis, after having long puzzled himſelf with conjectures about the deſign Mr. Courteney had formed, at length concluded that he had ſome expectations from the Earl of ——, his uncle, in favour of his ſiſter; and he was ſo unfortunately circumſtanced between his father's avarice and Mr. Courteney's ſtrict principles of honour, that he was reduced to wiſh earneſtly for the ſucceſs of an expedient, which he would have diſdained, if he had been maſter of his own actions. Mr. Courteney, at parting, which was in a few days, begged him to rely ſecurely upon his friendſhip, and to be mindful of the promiſe he had given him, which the young lord again confirmed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

IN WHICH THE HISTORY DRAWS NEAR TO A CONCLUSION.

MR. Courteney found his ſhort abſence had rather endeared him to his aunt, than leſſened the ardour of her fondneſs. Encouraged by her behaviour, he was ſeveral times upon the point of laying open to her the whole affair of his pupil's paſſion for Henrietta, and the difficulties which obſtructed ſo advantageous a match; difficulties which ſhe could ſo eaſily remove: but he hoped a great deal from the preſence of Henrietta, which it was highly probable would revive the old lady's tenderneſs for her; and from the interpoſition of Mr. Damer, who, it was not to be doubted, would enter heartily into the intereſt of his ward, for whom he expreſſed ſo tender an affection.

While he waited in anxious expectation of a letter from his ſiſter, to acquaint him when ſhe was to leave Paris, with her guardian, he was pleaſingly ſurprized with a billet from Mr. Damer himſelf, requeſting him to meet Miſs Courteney and him at the houſe of Mrs. Willis, where they were juſt arrived.

Mr. Courteney, without communicating this news to Lady Meadows, haſtened to ſee his beloved ſiſter. The moment he entered the room, where ſhe was ſitting with her guardian and Mrs. Willis, ſhe flew to receive him with a tranſport of joy. He embraced her tenderly; and Mr. Damer advancing to ſalute him, he in the politeſt manner thanked him for his generous care of Henrietta.

Mr. Damer was extremely pleaſed to hear that ſhe might depend upon an affectionate reception from her aunt. 'And now, my child,' ſaid he, for ſo he tenderly affected to call her, 'ſince I 'have delivered you ſafe into the hands 'of your brother, I will leave you, and 'a day or two hence I will viſit you at 'your aunt's, and ſettle your affairs in 'a manner which I hope will not be diſ'agreeable to you.'

Henrietta, who, from ſome paſt converſations with him, well knew the kind purport of theſe words, by a grateful look and a reſpectful curtſey, expreſſed her acknowledgment. Mr. Courteney, ſeeing him prepare to leave them, begged he would favour him with a few moments private converſation. Mr. Damer readily conſented; upon which Mrs. Willis ſhewed them into another room, and returned to load her dear Miſs Courteney with a thouſand tender careſſes.

Mean time Mr. Courteney gave the friendly guardian of his ſiſter a brief account of the marquis's paſſion for her, and the conduct he had obſerved in that affair. He added, that he believed it would be eaſy to engage the duke's conſent to his ſon's marriage with Henrietta, provided her aunt would act as generouſly towards her, as ſhe had formerly given her reaſon to expect.

'From ſeveral hints,' ſaid he, 'which 'Lady Meadows has thrown out, and 'from the great kindneſs ſhe expreſſes 'for me, I am apprehenſive that ſhe in'tends to transfer her bounty from my 'ſiſter to me; but as my circumſtances, 'though not affluent, are eaſy, and as 'I have nothing ſo much at heart as the 'happineſs of my friend and my ſiſter, 'I will moſt chearfully relinquiſh in her 'favour all my expectations from Lady 'Meadows. The proſpect of ſo ad'vantageous a match will probably have 'ſome weight with her aunt; and the 'mention of it will come with propriety 'from you, Sir, as the guardian of Hen'rietta. Lady Meadows will then ex'plain herſelf clearly; and we ſhall 'have an opportunity given us of preſ'ſing her to remove, by her generoſity, 'the only obſtacle that obſtructs my 'ſiſter's advancement.'

Mr. Damer was prodigiouſly affected with the uncommon nobleneſs of this proceeding. He took the young gentleman's hand, and, giving it an affectionate ſhake, 'I ſhall love and ho'nour you while I live,' ſaid he, 'for 'this generous propoſal: doubt not of 'my ready concurrence in every mea'ſure for your ſiſter's advantage. I 'love her as well as if ſhe was my own 'daughter; and the inconveniencies ſhe 'has ſuffered through the folly and im'prudence of ſome of my family, require 'that I ſhould make her amends, by do'ing every thing in my power to make 'her happy.

'I will wait upon Lady Meadows,' purſued he, 'to-morrow in the after'noon, and then we will talk over this 'affair.' Mr. Courteney told him, he would prepare his aunt for the viſit he intended her. After which, Mr. Damer

mer went away, and he joined his ſiſter and her friend. A coach being ordered, they took leave of Mrs. Willis, whom Henrietta promiſed to viſit again very ſpeedily. Mr. Courteney had ſome diſcourſe with his ſiſter as they went, concerning the marquis; but carefully avoided mentioning his deſign to her, leſt he ſhould raiſe hopes which might be unhappily diſappointed.

Henrietta was under ſome perturbation at the thoughts of appearing before her aunt, whoſe diſpleaſure againſt her, and unjuſt ſuſpicions, all recurred to her memory; but the reception the old lady gave her, immediately effaced theſe impreſſions: it was perfectly kind and affectionate, without the leaſt mixture of upbraiding or reproach.

'I had a mind to ſurprize you, Ma-'dam,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, who with infinite pleaſure beheld his ſiſter ſo tenderly embraced by her aunt. Lady Meadows aſſured him, that he had ſurprized her very agreeably; and, again embracing Henrietta, told her, that her good friend, the Counteſs of ——, had been very laviſh in her praiſe, and had acquainted her with ſeveral circumſtances of her conduct, which raiſed her highly in her opinion.

'I ſuppoſe you will not be very much 'grieved,' added the old lady, ſmiling, 'to hear that your former lover Lord 'B—— is married to the citizen's 'daughter.'

'No, indeed, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'they ſeemed to be formed for 'each other.'

'They are not very happy, I hear,' ſaid Lady Meadows; who, having fallen upon the article of domeſtick news, related a great number of anecdotes concerning her acquaintance, ſome of which Henrietta had often heard before. The old lady's fondneſs for talking at length gave way to her curioſity to hear every thing that had happened to her niece during their ſeparation.

Henrietta gratified it with diſcretion, ſuppreſſing whatever might tend to revive diſagreeable remembrances. She was now put into poſſeſſion of her former apartment, and had an opportunity that night to congratulate her old friend Mrs. White (who aſſiſted her to undreſs) upon her being reinſtated in the favour of her lady.

CHAP. XII.

WHICH CONCLUDES THE HISTORY.

THE next day Mr. Courteney informed Lady Meadows, that Mr. Damer intended to wait on her; and hinted that he had a match to propoſe for Henrietta, which he hoped ſhe would approve.

Lady Meadows, who had already taken her reſolution with regard to both brother and ſiſter, told him, that ſhe was very deſirous of ſeeing her niece ſettled; and that ſhe was determined never to oppoſe her inclinations, being convinced that her virtue and prudence were to be entirely depended upon.

Mr. Damer came according to his appointment; and, being ſoon after left alone with Lady Meadows, he acquainted her with the whole affair between the Marquis of —— and Henrietta, as he had received it from Mr. Courteney; and, obſerving that the old lady was dazzled with the proſpect of her niece becoming a dutcheſs, added, that the want of a ſuitable fortune ſhould not hinder the advancement of Henrietta: 'for whatever 'you deſign for her, Madam,' ſaid he, 'I will double; ſo great is my re-'gard for her, and admiration of her 'virtues.'

Lady Meadows with reaſon thought this a very generous propoſal. She complimented him upon it; and, ſtepping to her cabinet, took out a box that contained her will, and another deed which had been drawn up while Mr. Courteney was in the country with the Duke of ——, but were not yet executed. She put theſe papers into Mr. Damer's hands, and deſired him to read them, ſaying—'You will there ſee, Sir, what I 'intend to do for my nephew and his 'ſiſter.'

Mr. Damer opened the firſt, which was the will. He found ſhe had conſtituted Mr. Courteney her heir, leaving him her whole eſtate, charging it only with the ſum of five thouſand pounds, to be paid his ſiſter on the day of her marriage. The other paper contained a ſettlement of three hundred pounds a year upon Mr. Courteney during her life.

Mr. Damer, who knew the young gentleman's

gentleman's ſentiments, propoſed to Lady Meadows to ſend for him, and acquaint him with her intentions. To this ſhe readily agreed. Mr. Courteney turned pale when he heard the moderate ſum deſigned for his ſiſter; and, after expreſſing his gratitude to Lady Meadows for the favour ſhe ſhewed him, in terms the moſt reſpectful and affectionate, he earneſtly conjured her to let Henrietta be at leaſt an equal ſharer with him in her kindneſs. He urged, as a motive to her to comply, the very advantageous match that was propoſed to his ſiſter. He expatiated on the marquis's tender and faithful paſſion for her; and touched with great delicacy upon the ſentiments Henrietta could not avoid entertaining for a young nobleman, who had loved her with honour, even when ignorant of her birth, and when ſhe was under very humiliating circumſtances.

Lady Meadows interrupted him with the moſt flattering praiſes of his diſintereſtedneſs; but declared that her reſolution was unalterable. 'Your ſiſter 'will have ten thouſand pounds,' ſaid ſhe; 'this is no deſpicable fortune: and 'ſince there is ſo much love on the ſide 'of the marquis, there is no doubt but 'it will be thought ſufficient.'

Mr. Damer explained the old lady's meaning, by telling him what he propoſed to do for Miſs Courteney; and preventing the young gentleman's acknowledgments—'You have ſufficiently 'ſhewn your regard for your ſiſter,' ſaid he, 'and I am of opinion we ought 'not to preſs Lady Meadows any more 'on this ſubject; ſhe has acted nobly by 'you both.'

The lady was extremely flattered by the praiſe Mr. Damer gave her; and, to prevent any more ſolicitations from her nephew, ſhe ſigned the papers immediately, which Mr. Damer, at her requeſt, witneſſed.

Mr. Courteney ſaid every thing that gratitude and politeneſs could ſuggeſt, upon her preſenting him the ſettlement; yet there was an air of concern upon his countenance, which Mr. Damer obſerving, took an opportunity to deſire him, in a whiſper, to meet him at a coffee-houſe (which he named to him) that evening, having ſomething to ſay to him, which he hoped would make all things eaſy.

Mr. Courteney promiſed to attend him. He then begged Lady Meadows not to let Henrietta know what had paſſed with regard to the marquis. 'At 'preſent,' ſaid he, 'ſhe conſiders this 'marriage as impoſſible to be effected, 'and ſo I would have her conſider it, 'till I am ſure that the duke will make 'no objection to the fortune that is de-'ſigned her.' Lady Meadows approved of his caution; and Mr. Damer was deſired to viſit her in her own apartment, and acquaint her with the diſpoſitions made by her aunt.

Henrietta expreſſed the higheſt ſatisfaction at what had been done for her beloved brother; and, with the greateſt ſweetneſs, acknowledged her obligations to her aunt for the proviſion ſhe had made for her: but when Mr. Damer acquainted her with the addition he deſigned to make to the fortune her aunt would give her, tears of tenderneſs and gratitude overſpread her face, and ſhe could utter no more than—'O! Sir, 'how generous—how kind is this—'how ſhall I repay ſuch unexampled 'goodneſs!'

Mr. Damer interrupted her ſoft exclamations, to lead her down ſtairs to her aunt, to whom ſhe paid her acknowledgments with inimitable grace, and congratulated her brother with ſo ſincere a joy, that he, who knew how much he was likely to loſe by his good fortune, was moved almoſt to tears.

Mr. Damer a ſhort time afterwards took his leave, and went to the coffee-houſe, where he had appointed Mr. Courteney to meet him. He was ſoon followed by the young gentleman, whoſe mind was under great agitations on his ſiſter's account.

'One would hardly imagine,' ſaid Mr. Damer to him, ſmiling, 'that you 'have juſt been declared heir to a good 'eſtate; you look like one diſappointed 'and unhappy.'

'I am indeed diſappointed, Sir,' replied Mr. Courteney: 'I had laid a 'plan to make my ſiſter and my friend 'happy; but my aunt's partiality has 'broke all my meaſures for the preſent.'

'Then you intend,' ſaid Mr. Damer, who had taken particular notice of his laſt words, 'to make ſome addition to 'your ſiſter's fortune, when the eſtate 'comes into your hands?'

'Certainly, Sir,' replied Mr. Courteney;

teney; 'I ſhould but ill deſerve it, if I 'did not.'

'It muſt be confeſſed,' reſumed Mr. Damer, 'that you are a very good bro-'ther.'

'All that I can do for my ſiſter, Sir,' ſaid he, 'will be but bare juſtice; but 'your generoſity to her can never be 'enough admired.'

'No more of that,' interrupted Mr. Damer. 'I love your ſiſter: ſhe is a 'worthy young woman; I am grieved 'to think ſo noble a match for her 'ſhould meet with any obſtruction for 'the want of a fortune. What do you 'think the duke will expect?'

'The lady he has propoſed to his ſon, 'Sir,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'has twenty 'thouſand pounds; and it would have 'been my pride and happineſs to have 'prevailed with my aunt to make my 'ſiſter's fortune equal to that.'

'Is it poſſible!' cried Mr. Damer, ſurprized. 'Why, fifteen thouſand 'pounds is at leaſt one third of your 'aunt's fortune.'

'My ſiſter,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'has a right to expect it. The whole 'would have been hers but for ſome 'unlucky accidents, and the ſtrange 'partiality of Lady Meadows for me. 'All that I can now do is, to let the 'marquis know, that my ſiſter will have 'ten thouſand pounds paid on the day 'of her marriage, and ten thouſand more 'on the death of her aunt. The duke 'loves money; and I greatly doubt whe-'ther all his ſon's ſolicitations will make 'him reliſh this reverſionary ten thou-'ſand pounds.'

'We will not put it to the hazard,' interrupted Mr. Damer: 'ſince you are 'determined to act thus generouſly by 'your ſiſter, I will lay down the money 'myſelf, and all the ſecurity I require, 'is your bond for the re-payment of it 'when your aunt's eſtate comes into 'your poſſeſſion.'

Mr. Courteney was ſo overwhelmed with ſurprize, joy, and gratitude, for this unexpected, noble offer, that, during ſome moments, he was unable to utter a word. But this ſilence, accompanied with looks the moſt expreſſive that can be imagined, was more eloquent than any language could be. Recovering himſelf at laſt, he was beginning to pay the warmeſt acknowledgments; but Mr. Damer would not ſuffer him to proceed.

'I am impatient,' ſaid he, 'for the 'concluſion of this affair. Write to 'your friend immediately, and let him 'know that your ſiſter's guardian will 'treat with the duke his father when-'ever he pleaſes.'

Mr. Courteney, at his reiterated requeſt, took leave of him, and went home, in order to communicate this joyful news to his friend. Hearing that Lady Meadows and his ſiſter were engaged in company, he went to his own apartment, and wrote a ſhort letter to the marquis, in which he acquainted him, that his ſiſter being reſtored to the favour of her aunt, he had it now in his power to aſſure him, that if he continued in the ſame ſentiments towards her, and could prevail with his Grace to authorize them by his conſent, he was impowered by her aunt and her guardian to declare that her fortune would be twenty thouſand pounds.

Having ſealed and diſpatched this letter to the poſt, he joined the company below ſtairs, with looks ſo full of ſatisfaction, and a behaviour animated with ſuch extraordinary gaiety, that Lady Meadows was more than ever delighted with him, concluding that the noble proviſion ſhe had made for him was the ſource of his joy: but Henrietta, who knew her brother better, and who beſides ſaw ſomething particular in thoſe looks which he from time to time gave her, felt ſtrange flutterings in her gentle boſom; hopes checked as ſoon as formed; wiſhes ſuppreſſed as they roſe. In theſe perturbations, ſhe paſſed that night and the three following days.

Mean time the marquis, having received Mr. Courteney's letter, was ſo ſurprized at this ſudden change in the fortune of Henrietta, that he read it over ſeveral times before he could perſuade himſelf what he ſaw was real. His firſt emotions were all tranſport: every obſtacle to his marriage was now removed; and he might ſolicit his father's conſent, with a certainty almoſt of not being denied. Yet a ſentiment of delicacy and tenderneſs made him regret, that it was not in his power to convince Henrietta of the diſintereſtedneſs of his love, and for ſome moments rendered him inſenſible of his preſent happineſs.

The duke came into his chamber while he was reading the letter the twentieth time, and ſo intently, that he did not perceive his entrance: when ſuddenly

ſuddenly raiſing his eyes, and ſeeing his father, who, ſuſpecting that this letter, which he ſeemed to read with ſo much emotion, came from his miſtreſs, was looking earneſtly on him.

'O! my lord,' cried he, 'there is 'nothing wanting to make me perfectly 'happy, but your conſent to my mar-'riage with Miſs Courteney. See, my 'lord, what her brother writes; her 'brother, who till now has ſo obſtinately 'oppoſed my paſſion!'

The duke took the letter out of his hands; and, having read it, returned it to him again without ſpeaking a word, and walked to the other end of the room. The marquis, who ſaw nothing unfavourable in his looks, followed him; and, throwing himſelf at his feet, conjured him not to oppoſe his happineſs any longer. The duke deſired time to conſider; but his ſon would not give over his ſolicitations, till he had obtained leave of him to viſit Miſs Courteney, and to declare that his addreſſes had the ſanction of his conſent.

The happy marquis gave orders inſtantly for his poſt-chaiſe to be got ready, which his father at firſt did not oppoſe; but, after reflecting a little—

'Can you not rein in your impatience 'for a few days?' ſaid he to him: 'I 'intend to be in town next week; I 'ſhall then have an opportunity of ſee-'ing the young lady; and, ſince you are 'ſo obſtinately bent upon the match, of 'talking to her aunt and her guardian.'

The marquis would not diſoblige his father, by making any objections to this little delay, grievous as it was to him; but retired to write to Mr. Courteney, whom he acquainted with the duke's intentions; and, anticipating the tender name of brother, poured out his whole heart in the warmeſt expreſſions of love, friendſhip, joy, and every ſoft emotion with which he was agitated.

Mr. Courteney having communicated this letter to Mr. Damer, he agreed that it was neceſſary to make Lady Meadows acquainted with the ſteps they had taken in the affair. She entered with a good grace into the generous deſigns of her nephew in favour of his ſiſter.

'If I had done more for her,' ſaid ſhe to him, ſmiling, 'you would not 'have had an opportunity of doing ſo 'much.' Mr. Courteney kiſſed her hand with a tender and reſpectful air.

'Go,' ſaid ſhe, with a look that ſhewed ſhe was highly pleaſed; 'go, 'and tell your ſiſter this good news; 'and tell her alſo that I am impatient 'to embrace and congratulate her.'

Mr. Courteney willingly obeyed her. He went to Henrietta's apartment; and, ſeeing her ſitting penſive and melancholy, he began to rally her upon her tenderneſs for the marquis. She bore it with great ſweetneſs, but not without ſome ſurprize; for her brother was uſed to be very delicate and reſerved upon that ſubject. By degrees he aſſumed a more ſerious tone; and at length gave her to underſtand, that the marquis was now permitted by his father to pay his addreſſes to her.

Henrietta bluſhed and trembled from the moment her brother began to ſpeak to her in a ſerious manner. Her emotions increaſed as he proceeded; yet ſhe laboured to conceal them, till Mr. Courteney, explaining to her what Mr. Damer had done for her, which neceſſarily included his own generous gift, that innate delicacy, which had forced her joy to be ſilent, ſuffered her gratitude to ſhew itſelf in the moſt lively expreſſions. Lady Meadows came into the room, and gave a ſeaſonable interruption to theſe tender effuſions of her heart, which Mr. Courteney had liſtened to with a kind of painful pleaſure. She embraced her niece, and congratulated her on her happy fortune.

Miſs Courteney, who had now reaſon to expect a viſit from the marquis, was not much ſurprized, a few days afterwards, to ſee his equipage at the door. After a few moments converſation with Mr. Courteney, he was introduced to Lady Meadows, who received him with great reſpect. Henrietta bluſhed a little when he appeared; but recovered herſelf, and received the tender and reſpectful compliment he made her with her uſual grace.

A great deal of company coming in ſoon afterwards, he found means to engage her apart for a quarter of an hour. Their converſation was ſuch as might be expected between perſons of their ſenſe and politeneſs, who loved each other with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and now for the firſt time ſaw themſelves at liberty to declare their ſentiments. Henrietta did not ſcruple to own to the man, who had ſo nobly merited her eſteem, that her heart had received a more ten-

ſer, impreſſion for him; and this ſoft acknowledgment compleated her lover's felicity.

Mr. Courteney waited upon the duke the next morning, and had the pleaſure to hear from his own mouth, that he was entirely ſatisfied with his ſon's proceedings. His Grace viſited Lady Meadows the ſame day; and was *ſo* charmed with Henrietta, that he ſcarce diſcovered leſs impatience than his ſon for the concluſion of the marriage. Every thing being agreed on between the duke and Mr. Damer, with regard to ſettlements, the writings were drawn up with all convenient ſpeed, and a day appointed for the marriage.

Lady Meadows, though a Roman Catholick, allowed the ceremony to be performed at her houſe: after which the new-married pair, with the old lady, the Duke, Mr. Damer, and Mr. Courteney, ſet out for his Grace's country-ſeat.

The charming marchioneſs did not make her firſt publick appearance in town till late in the enſuing winter; when her beauty, her ſufferings, her virtue, and her good fortune, were for a long time the ſubjects of converſation.

Mr. Courteney, happy in the conſcious integrity of his heart, happy in the ardent affection of his ſiſter and the marquis, and the eſteem of all who knew him, was, by the death of Lady Meadows, which happened a few months after his ſiſter's marriage, enabled to diſcharge his obligations to Mr. Damer. His generoſity was not long unrewarded: an opulent heireſs fell deſperately in love with him; ſhe was related to the duke, who intereſted himſelf ſo warmly in the affair, that the marriage was ſoon concluded.

Lord B——, as has been obſerved already, lived very unhappy with his plebeian lady. The ſight of the charming Henrietta renewed his paſſion. Tortured with remorſe, diſappointment, and deſpair, he had recourſe to the bottle, and fell an early ſacrifice to intemperance.

Miſs Woodby, who had always a violent paſſion for a red-coat, liſtened to the ſighs of a young cadet, and married him in a week after their firſt acquaintance. Her excuſe for this precipitancy was, that the *lovely youth* would certainly have ſtabbed himſelf, if ſhe had delayed his happineſs any longer. With part of her fortune he bought a commiſſion, and ſpent the reſt in a few months. After which, he went abroad with his regiment, leaving her, in an obſcure retirement, to bewail his abſence, and ſoothe her love-ſick heart with hopes that he would return more *paſſionate* than ever, and lay all his laurels at her feet.

Miſs Belmour, forſaken by her lover, became a proſelyte to the Roman Catholick religion, and retired to a convent, where the nuns wrought her up to ſuch a degree of enthuſiaſm, that ſhe ſettled her whole fortune upon the community, and took the veil; but ſoon afterwards, repenting of this raſh ſtep, ſhe died of grief, remorſe, and diſappointment.

Mrs. Willis was generouſly rewarded by the marchioneſs for the many kind and faithful ſervices ſhe had received from her: and Mr. Damer, who highly eſteemed her for her behaviour to his beauteous ward, ſettled her huſband in ſuch an advantageous way, that in a few years he made a conſiderable fortune.

The younger Mr. Damer found, in the inceſſant clamours of a jealous wife, a ſufficient puniſhment for his treacherous deſigns on Henrietta; and it was not without great difficulty that he was reſtored to his father's favour.

Every branch of the Courteney family made frequent advances towards a reconciliation with the marchioneſs and her brother: but, generous as they were, they had too juſt a ſenſe of the indignities they had ſuffered from them, to admit of it; and, in this ſteady reſentment, they had, as it uſually happens with ſucceſsful perſons, the world on their ſide.

FINIS.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM